

HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN M.DCC.LXXXIX.

TO THE RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN M.DCCC.XV.

BY ARCHIBALD ALISON, F.R.S.E.

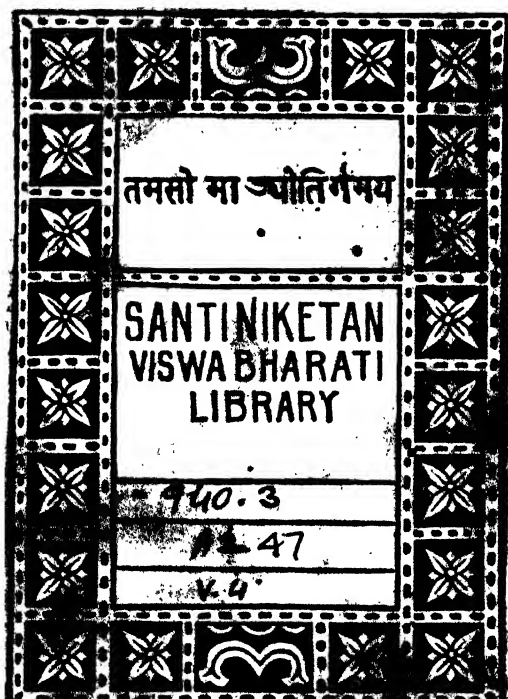
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HISTORY OF EUROPE.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAMPAIGN OF 1793.

A CONTEST between France and England has, in every age, been the greatest source of excitement to the people in both countries; but at no former period were their passions so strongly roused as at the commencement of the Revolutionary war. Not only was national rivalry, the growth of centuries, revived, but new and fiercer passions arose from the civil interests which were brought into collision. The dominant party in England regarded the war with France, not merely as a contest with a rival power; in which glory or conquest was to be won, but as a struggle for existence in which their lives, their fortunes, and their country, were at stake. The French Republicans looked upon the accession of England to the league of their enemies, as the signal of deadly combat with the principles of freedom; and anticipated from defeat not only national humiliation, but individual ruin. The English nobility beheld in the conquests of the Republicans the dissemination of the principles of revolution and anarchy, the spread of infidelity, the reign of the guillotine; the French Jacobins saw in the victories of the Allies the near approach of moral retribution, the revenge of injury, the empire of the sword.

No words can convey an adequate idea of the bitterness of party feeling which divided this country upon the breaking out of the war in 1793. "War to the palace, and peace

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

1.
Vehemence
of all wars
between
France and
England.

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XIII.

1793.

2.

Great division of opinion on the French Revolution in Great Britain.

to the cottage," was the principle of the French Revolution. Its proclamation necessarily set the two classes of society throughout Europe at variance with each other; and instead of the ancient rivalry of kings, introduced the fiercer strife of the people. Like the Peloponnesian war, the contest thenceforth raged not only between nation and nation, but between interest and interest; a strife of opinion superseded that for glory; and in every province and in every city, numbers were to be found who watched the contending parties with opposite feelings, and hoped in the victory of foreign enemies for the downfall of domestic foes. England, as well as France, had talent impatient of obscurity: ardour which demanded employment; ambition which sought distinction; passion which required excitation. To such men, the whole body of the aristocracy became an object of uncontrollable jealousy; and nothing short of the equality proclaimed by the French rulers seemed the fit destiny of society. Hence the division of the country into Aristocrats and Democrats; the introduction of political hatred into the bosom of families, and the dissolution of many friendships which all the misfortunes of life could never have severed. Time heals almost all other sorrows, absence softens the worst causes of irritation; but experience has proved, that the political divisions of 1793 never were forgotten by those who were of an age to feel their influence.¹

¹ Scott's Napoleon, i. 280.

3.

Arguments against the war by the Whigs.

The breaking out of the war formed a new subject of discord between the contending parties. On the part of the opposition, it was argued, that to plunge into a desperate war, for so inconsiderable an object as the opening of the Scheldt, was to incur a certain and heavy loss on account of a most trifling cause of complaint: that the whole trade with the United Provinces was not worth one year's expense of the contest; and that, while it was easy to see what England had to lose, it was difficult to conceive what she could possibly gain from the conflict she had so unnecessarily provoked: that if the spread of revolutionary opinions was the evil which, in reality, was dreaded, nothing could be imagined so likely to increase the danger as engaging in a war, because it is during its perils that the interchange of opinions is most rapid, and prejudice most certainly yields to the force of

necessity: that thoughts are not to be confined by walls, nor freedom fenced in by bayonets: that the moral agents requisite for carrying the designs of tyranny into execution, become the instruments for its own destruction; and that the despots who now sought to extinguish freedom in France, would find, like the Eastern Sultaun, that the forces they had brought up to avert the plague, were the means of spreading its contagion through all the provinces of their empire.

On the other hand, the Tories maintained that the war was both just and expedient; just, because the Dutch, the ancient allies of Britain, were threatened with invasion, and the destruction of rights on which the existence of their Republic depended; expedient, because experience had proved that such an aggression could not be permitted without ruin to the vital interests of Britain: that such a violation of neutral rights came with a peculiarly bad grace from France, that power having, only ten years before, successfully interfered on the footing of ancient treaties, to prevent that very act in regard to the Scheldt navigation on the part of Austria, which was now attempted by her own forces: that if Great Britain was to sit by and tamely behold the rights of her allies, and of all neutral powers, sacrificed by her ancient rival, there would soon be an end, not only to her foreign influence, but to her internal security: that it was evident that the Republicans, who had now acquired the government of France, were impelled by the thirst for universal dominion, and would never rest, till, by the aid of revolution in the adjoining states, they had incorporated them all with the ruling Republic: that the recent annexation of Savoy, Nice, and Flanders, with the French territory, gave sufficient proof of this grasping disposition, and afforded due warning to the neighbouring powers to place no reliance on the professions of a state, in which no principle was fixed but that of republican ambition: that treaties were vain with a government subject to such sudden changes, as that of the French Republic, and in which each successive party which rose to the head of affairs, disregarding the faith of ancient engagements, sought only to gain a short-lived popularity by new and dazzling schemes of foreign aggression: that the Convention had already given the clearest

4.
And for it by
the Tories.

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1793.

indication of its resolution to shake itself loose of all former obligations, by its remarkable declaration, that "Treaties made by despots could never bind the free and enlightened inhabitants of Belgium:" that in all ages republics had been the most ambitious and the most warlike of states, in consequence of the restless and insatiable spirit which their institutions tended to nourish among the mass of their citizens, and the necessity which their rulers felt themselves under of signalling their short-lived power by some acts calculated to dazzle the multitude; that the French Republic had already given ample proof that they were not destined to form any exception to the general rule, and even if their leaders were inclined to such forbearance, the suffering and ambition of the people would soon drive them into action: that history proved both that France was too powerful for Europe when her territory was advanced to the Rhine, and that the moment her influence became predominant, it would all be directed with inveterate hostility against this country: that in this way the contest would sooner or later approach our own shores, and if so, how much better to anticipate the evil, when it might be done with comparative ease, and crush the growing Republic before it wielded the forces of Europe at its will.¹

¹ Parl. Hist.
xxx. p. 79—
124. Annual
Register,
1793, p. 15.

Such were the arguments urged in this country generally on the policy of this great undertaking: those advanced in Parliament related, as is usual with debates in that assembly, less to the general policy of the measure, or the principles involved in it on both sides, than to the immediate causes which had led to a rupture.

5.
Arguments
in Parlia-
ment on the
same sub-
ject.

On the part of the opposition, it was contended by Mr Fox and Mr Grey, "that the causes of war with France were in no respect different now from what they were under the government of Louis XIV. or Louis XVI. What, then, were those causes? Not an insult or aggression, but a refusal of satisfaction when specifically demanded. What proof had ministers produced of such demand and of such refusal? It may be admitted that the decree of November 19th entitled this country to require an explanation; but even of this they could not show that any clear and specific explanation had been demanded. Security that the French would not act upon that decree, was, indeed, mentioned in one of Lord Grenville's letters,

but what kind of security was neither specified nor even named. The same might be said with respect to the opening of the Scheldt, and the conquest of Brabant. We complained of an attack on the rights of our ally; we remonstrated against an accession of territory alarming to Europe; but we proposed nothing that would be admitted as satisfaction for the injury—we pointed out nothing that would remove our alarm. The same argument applied to their conquest of Savoy from the King of Sardinia, with whom, in their opinion, they were at war as much as with the Emperor. Can it be said, that it was our business only to complain, and theirs to propose satisfaction? Common sense would see that this was too much for one independent power to expect of another. By what clue could they discover that which would satisfy those who did not choose to tell with what they would be satisfied? How could they judge of the too little, or the too much? And was it not natural for them to suppose that complaints, for which nothing was stated as adequate satisfaction, there was no disposition to withdraw? Yet on this the whole question of aggression hinged; for that the refusal of satisfaction, and not the insult, was the justifiable cause of war, was not merely his opinion, but the opinion of all the writers on the law of nations, and how could that be said to have been refused which was never asked? Of the death of the King, none could ever speak but with grief and detestation. But was the expression of our sorrow all that we did? Was not the atrocious event made the subject of a message from his Majesty to both Houses of Parliament? And now they would ask the few more candid men who owned that they thought this event alone a sufficient cause of war, what end could be gained by further negotiations with Chauvelin, with Marat, or Dumourier? Did ministers mean to barter the blood of this ill-fated monarch for any of the points in dispute? to say that the evacuation of Brabant shall atone for so much, the evacuation of Savoy for so much more? Of this they would accuse no man; but on their principle, when the crime was committed negotiation must cease. It might be admitted, however, with the right honourable gentleman, that this crime was no cause of war; but if it were admitted to be so, it was surely not decent that the subject of war should never be

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1793.

even mentioned without reverting to the death of the King. When the attack on France was called the cause of kings, it was not only a very witty, but a sufficient reply, that opposing it might be called the cause of subjects. It is fortunate that the public abhorrence of a war on such a motive was so great, that the right honourable gentleman felt himself called upon to disclaim it at great length. But how had ministers acted? They had taken advantage of the folly of the French; they had negotiated without proposing specific terms, and then broken off the negotiation. At home they had alarmed the people that their own constitution was in danger, and they had made use of a melancholy event, which, however it might affect us as men, did not concern us as a nation, to inflame our passions and impel us to war; and now that we were at war, they durst not avow the causes of it, nor tell us on what terms peace might have been preserved.”¹

¹ Parl. Hist.
xxx. 370,
378.

6.
Reply by Mr
Burke and
Mr Pitt.

On the other hand, it was contended by Mr Pitt and Mr Burke, that, “whatever temptations might have existed to this country from ancient enmity and rivalry, party motives indeed! or whatever opportunity might have been afforded by the tumultuous and distracted state of France, or whatever sentiments might be excited by the transactions which had taken place in that nation, his Majesty had uniformly abstained from all interference in its internal government, and had maintained with respect to it, on every occasion, the strictest and most inviolable neutrality. Such being his conduct towards France, he had a right to expect on their part a suitable return; more especially as this return had been expressly conditioned for by a compact, into which they entered, and by which they engaged to respect the rights of his Majesty and his allies, not to interfere in the government of any neutral country, and not to pursue any system of aggrandisement, or make any additions to their dominions, but to confine themselves at the conclusion of the war within their own territories. These conditions they had all grossly violated, and had adopted a system of ambitious and destructive policy, fatal to the peace and security of every government, and which, in its consequences, had shaken Europe itself to its foundations. Their decree of the 19th of November, which had been so much talked of,

offering fraternity and alliance to all people who wished to recover their liberty, was a decree not levelled against particular nations, but against every country where there was any form of government established; a decree not hostile to individuals, but to the human race; which was calculated every where to sow the seeds of rebellion and civil contention, and to spread war from one end of Europe to the other, from one end of the globe to the other. While they were bound to this country by these obligations, they had showed no intention to exempt it from the consequences of this decree. Not only had they showed no inclination to fulfil their engagements, but they had even put it out of their own power, by taking the first opportunity to make additions to their territory, in contradiction to their own express stipulations. By express resolutions for the destruction of the existing government of all invaded countries, by means of Jacobin societies, by orders given to their generals, by the whole system adopted in this respect by the National Assembly, and by the actual annexation of the whole country of Savoy, they had marked their determination to add to the dominions of France, and to provide means, through the medium of every new conquest, to diffuse their principles over Europe. Their conduct was such, that in every instance it had militated against the dearest and most valuable interests of this country. The catastrophe of the French Monarch they ought all to feel deeply; and, consistently with that impression, be led more firmly to resist those principles from which an event of so black and atrocious a nature had proceeded; principles which, if not opposed, might be expected in their progress to lead to the commission of similar crimes; but, notwithstanding all this, although government had been obliged to decline all communication which tended to acknowledge the authority of the Convention, still they had left open the means of accommodation, nor could that line of conduct which they had pursued be stated as affording any ground of hostility."¹

The event has at length enabled the historian to decide which of these views is the most reasonable; for we know the evil we have incurred, and we can figure the peril we have escaped, by engaging in the contest. In truth, the arguments urged by government were not the only mo-

CHAP.

XIII.

1793.

¹ Parl. Hist.
xxx. 345,
362.

7.
Real motives
for the war.

CHAP.

XIII.

1793.

Segur, iii.
142.Segur, iii.
51. Ann.
leg. 1793,
42.

tives for commencing the war. The danger they apprehended lay nearer home than the conquests of the republicans; it was not foreign subjugation so much as domestic revolution, which was dreaded, if a pacific intercourse were any longer maintained with France. "Croyez-moi," said the Empress Catharine to Segur, in 1789, "une guerre seule peut changer la direction des esprits en France, les réunir, donner un but plus utile aux passions, et réveiller le vrai patriotisme."¹ * In this observation is contained the true secret, and the best vindication of the revolutionary war. The passions were excited; democratic ambition was awakened; the desire of power, under the name of reform, was rapidly gaining ground among the middle ranks, and the institutions of the country were threatened with an overthrow as violent as that which had recently taken place in the French monarchy. In these circumstances, the only mode of checking the evil was by engaging in a foreign contest, by drawing off the ardent spirits into active service, and, in lieu of the modern desire for innovation, rousing the ancient gallantry of the British people. When passion, whether in the political body or in the individual, is once roused, it is in vain, during the paroxysm, to combat it with the weapons of reason. A man in love is proverbially inaccessible to argument, and a nation heated in the pursuit of political power is as incapable of listening either to the deductions of the understanding, or the lessons of experience. The only way in such times of averting the evil, is by presenting some new object of pursuit, which is not only attractive to the thinking few, but to the unthinking many; by counteracting one passion by the growth of another, and summoning to the support of truth not only the armour of reason, but the fire of imagination. Great as has been the burden, enormous the waste, prodigal the expenditure of the war, the evils thence arising are trifling in comparison of what would have ensued had a revolution taken place. Such an event, its advocates themselves confess, can only benefit future generations by the destruction of the present;¹ its horrors, in a country such as

* "Believe me, a war alone can change the direction of men's minds in France, reunite them, give a more useful aim to the passions, and awaken true patriotism."

England, where three-fourths of the whole population depend upon the wages of labour, and would be directly deprived of bread by the destruction of capital, would have exceeded any thing yet experienced in modern times.

Another question, which strongly agitated the English people at this juncture, was that of reform in Parliament, which the popular party deemed it a favourable opportunity to urge, when a considerable part of the nation was so vehemently excited by the triumph of revolution in France.

In the House of Commons, it was argued by Mr Grey and Mr Erskine, "That the state of the national representation, especially in Scotland as compared with Cornwall, was so unequal, that no rational argument could be advanced in support of it. A majority of the House of Commons is returned by less than fifteen thousand electors, which is not more than a two-hundredth part of the male adults of the kingdom: this franchise, limited as it is, legally recurs only once in seven years: the total representation for Scotland was only one greater than that for Cornwall alone: twenty members were returned by thirty-five places where the right of voting was vested in burgage or similar tenures, and the elections were notoriously a matter of mere form: ninety more are chosen by forty-six places, where the right of voting is confined to less than fifty persons each: thirty-seven by nineteen places, in which the number of voters is under one hundred; fifty-two by twenty-six places, in none of which the voters exceed two hundred: thirty in Scotland, by counties having less than two hundred and fifty votes; and fifteen by Scotch boroughs not containing one hundred and twenty-five each. In this way two hundred and ninety-four members, a majority of the House of Commons, are chosen by a nominal and fictitious system, under which the people have hardly any choice in their election.

"In addition to this, the elective franchise is so various, complicated, and grotesque, that endless litigation and confusion arise from its practical operation. Religious opinions create an incapacity to vote in all Papists, and in thirty boroughs Protestant dissenters are, by the Test and Corporation laws, excluded from the franchise; copyholders, how wealthy soever, are universally excluded; and from the recent returns, it appears that no less than 939,000 householders in England alone had no voice in the

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1793.

R.
Debate in
Parliament
on Parlia-
mentary
Reform.

R.
Mr Grey and
Mr Erskine's
argument
for it.

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XIII.
1793.

¹ Parl. Hist.
xxx. 789,
796

representation. In Scotland, matters are still worse, the great mass of the people being altogether excluded from any voice in the legislature, and the members chosen by twenty-five hundred persons, great part of whom have only fictitious or parchment votes. In fine, one hundred and fifty-four powerful and wealthy individuals can determine the returns in no less than three hundred and seven seats, being a majority of the whole Commons of England.¹

"We are always told, when this question is introduced into Parliament, that the present juncture is not the proper season for bringing forward the measure." Nothing, however, can be more obvious, than that this excuse is now totally unfounded. The burst of loyalty on the breaking out of the war, of which the government so loudly boast, demonstrates the groundless nature of any such apprehension at this time. If ever there was any danger to this country from the propagation of French principles, that danger unquestionably is at an end; for no set of men who have not actually lost their senses, would ever propose the French Revolution as a model for imitation. No argument from the present situation of France, therefore, can be drawn against the adoption of a rational reform in this country. The greatest statesmen whom this country has ever produced, have advocated the cause which we now bring forward. It had been supported by Mr Locke, Sir William Blackstone, Sir George Saville, and the present Chief Baron and Chief Justice. It had the countenance, in his earlier years, of Mr Pitt himself; it has been advocated by the Duke of Richmond; and by an authority greater than either, that of the King himself, in his speech 24th May 1784, wherein his majesty says, 'that he should ever be ready to concur in supporting, in their just balance, the rights and privileges of every branch of the Legislature.'

"The present state of the representation is so monstrous, that it cannot, on general principles, be supported by any rational man. Who can defend a system which enables one English county to send as many members as the whole kingdom of Scotland? and allows representatives to be sent from many places where hardly a house now remains? If there was any one principle more strongly inculcated than another at the Revolution, it was, that the election of the House of Commons should be free.

One of the grounds assigned at that period for the dethronement of James was, that he had violated the freedom of election ; another, that a man ought not to be governed by laws in the framing of which he had not a voice, or to pay taxes to which he had not consented in the same way. Is not the present state of things a direct departure from both these principles ? At the Revolution, too, the necessity of short Parliaments was asserted ; and is not the theory and practice of the constitution now a direct infringement on these principles ? Can there be a more complete mockery than the system of representation in Scotland, where a nobleman's steward goes down to a borough with ten or twelve pieces of parchment in his hand, and, having assembled round a table ten or twelve of his master's dependents, secures the return. Mr Pitt had brought forward a motion for an addition of one hundred to the county members ; and in the commencement of every session, it is entered on the journals of the House, 'That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of England for any Lord of Parliament, or Lord-Lieutenant, to concern themselves in the election of members for Parliament.' Better far at once to repeal such resolutions, and openly proclaim our servility, than allow them to remain there, when the practice was so totally at variance with them."¹

To this it was replied by Mr Pitt, Mr Burke, and Mr Jenkinson—"The liberty of a country depends on its government, and very little experience must be sufficient to demonstrate that different countries require different institutions. The real test of their practical influence is to be found in their effects. Judging by this standard, what opinion must we form of the British constitution ? Is not property secure ? Is not the administration of justice pure ? Have we not arrived at a pitch of prosperity under it, unparalleled in any other age or country ? And what have been the fruits of the speculations of those who, disregarding the lessons of experience, have aimed at the establishment of institutions framed with a view to theoretical perfection ? The turbulent faction and unsettled despotism of democracy. The spots of the sun do not diminish its splendour. In considering the merits of the constitution, its working upon the whole is to be

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

¹ Parl. Hist.
xxx. 799,
807.

10.
Answers of
Mr Pitt, Mr
Burke, and
Mr Jenkin-
son.

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considered: the question is not, whether certain parts of it, if they stood alone, are defensible, but whether the whole machine is not admirable: not whether defects exist, but whether experience has not proved that these defects so far counteract each other, as to render it to the last degree perilous to interfere with the venerable fabric.

"I myself," said Mr Pitt, "once brought forward a motion for reform, and I am desirous of stating the reasons which induce me now to oppose it. I did so during a period of profound peace, when no speck appeared in the political horizon, and when the opportunity appeared favourable for amending our institutions, with a view to their preservation. Now the case is totally different. The French Revolution has entirely changed, not only the expedience of such a measure, but the class of men by whom, and the objects for which, it is supported. Since that great convulsion arose, I have observed arising in this country a small, but not contemptible party, whose object is very different from moderate reform: who aspire to nothing less than to introduce the French principles with all their horrors. In such circumstances, all the practical good to be expected from reform has disappeared, and the dangers to be apprehended from the adoption of any considerable change have augmented tenfold. Upon this ground, even had I rated as high as ever the advantages of reform, I would rather have abandoned my project than incurred such a danger. It is evident now, that the question is not, whether a moderate reform is to be conceded, but whether admission is to be afforded to the point of the wedge, which, when driven home, will rend asunder and dissolve the empire.

"From whom do the petitions for reform now come? Is it from the friends of the British constitution; from those whose character and principles warrant the belief, that their object is to renovate not destroy our institutions? No; they all come from the societies affiliated in this country for the purpose of spreading the Jacobin principles; from the avowed and ardent admirers of the French Republic; from the correspondents and imitators of the National Assembly; from men in whom all the horrors which they have engendered, and all the blood they have caused to flow, cannot awaken any distrust of

their principles. We must be blind indeed if we do not perceive what is the real object of innovation supported by such a party. In France, at the same time, they invariably mention Parliamentary reform as the medium by which all their revolutionary projects are to be forwarded in this country; and speak of a change in our representation, as but a step to the formation of a British Convention, and the total destruction of all our civil and religious institutions.

“Is it, then, to a party small in number, but dangerous from character, that we are to concede the first step on the ladder of innovation? Are we to disregard entirely the immense majority of loyal citizens, who are too sensible of the blessings they enjoy to risk them by such a change? What is the question really at issue. It is not whether the constituencies of Cornwall and Scotland are really such as ideal perfection would approve: it is the same which is now at issue with the whole of Europe, who are contending for the cause of order, justice, humanity, and religion, in opposition to anarchy, injustice, cruelty, and infidelity. The undue ascendancy given to property in these districts, is the check to the otherwise perilous influence of numbers in the larger boroughs. Are we at such a moment, in order to please a few individuals, to incur perils such as those we are now witnessing? This would, indeed, resemble the conduct of those who, at the moment when the citadel was besieged, would proceed to the discussion of points of difference, instead of providing the means of defence.

“I see no probability at this time of a temperate reform: I see no guarantee for it either in the temper of the times, or the character, habits, or views of those by whom it is supported. So far from satisfying them, it would only produce a craving for further concessions: they desire not the reform which they now advocate for itself, but as a stepping-stone to ulterior objects which they dare not avow, till their power of carrying them into effect is by this first acquisition secured. Knowing what these ulterior objects are—seeing the unspeakable horrors which it has introduced in that country where they have been carried into full effect, it is our duty to resist to the uttermost the first steps in the progress. The government which acts

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otherwise ceases to be a government; it unties the bands which knit together society; it forfeits the reverence and obedience of its subjects; it gives up those whom it ought to protect to the daggers of the Marsellais, and the assassins of Paris. The government of the multitude, to which reform is but a step, *is not the ruling of the few by the many, but of the many by the few*: with this difference, that the few at the head of affairs in such a state, are the most ambitious, reckless, and worthless of the community."¹*

¹ Parl. Hist.
xxx. 908,
902.

* It is curious, on a subject of such vital importance to England as Parliamentary Reform, to contrast these arguments with those urged for and against the same measure in the memorable discussions of 1830 and 1831. A summary of these is here subjoined, taken from the masterly speeches of Sir Robert Peel, Mr Croker, Lord Lyndhurst, Mr Stanley, and Lord-Advocate Jeffrey, as an instructive illustration of the progress of the human mind during the intervening period.

Parliamentary
Reform.
Arguments by
which it was
supported in
1831.

On the popular side, it was urged that the British constitution had gradually departed from the principles on which it was originally established, and on which alone stability could be expected for it in future: that by the decline of the population in some boroughs, and the vast increase of inhabitants in once rural districts, a large proportion of the members of the House of Commons had come to be returned by a few great families, while the great majority of the people were totally unrepresented; that such a state of things was an insupportable grievance to the bulk of the citizens, and could not fail, while it continued, to nourish perpetual discord between the holders of political influence and all the other classes of society; that an oligarchy, at all times an invidious form of government, was peculiarly so at the present time, when the public mind was inflamed by the successful result of the late Revolution in France; that, by admitting a larger number to a share of political rights, the foundations of government would be laid on a broader basis, and a phalanx secured who would at all times resist the extension of their privileges to a lower class, and be found the firmest supporters of social order; that it was altogether chimerical to suppose that there could be the slightest danger in extending the elective suffrage to a numerous body of voters, as the people were so habituated to political rights, and so enlightened by education, that they were as capable of exercising such franchise as their superiors; that unless political institutions were enlarged with the increase of those who shared their protection, they would be outgrown by the multitude, and burst from the expansive force of intelligence and numbers; that the true and legitimate influence of property could never be extinguished, and would only receive a wider sphere for its exertions by the increase of the circle to which the franchise was extended; that all revolutions had been occasioned by the obstinate adherence to old institutions, at a time when the state of society required their alteration; that timely concession was the only way to prevent convulsion, and in the present excited state of the public mind, if it was any longer delayed, the barriers of authority would be broken through, and all the horrors of the French Revolution brought upon the state.

Arguments
against it.

On the other hand, it was contended by the aristocratic party, that the present was not a motion for the reform of a real grievance, which was at all times entitled to the most serious attention, but for an increase of political power by the lower orders, which was to be conceded or refused according to its obvious tendency to preserve or subvert the balance of the constitution; that it was totally different from Mr Pitt's previous proposals of reform, which went to remove an admitted evil in a period of tranquillity; whereas the present motion was founded on a concession to French principles and democratic ambition, at a time of unexampled excitement: that it was evident that the popular party was already suffi-

Fortunately for England, and for the cause of freedom throughout the world, these arguments prevailed in the House of Commons. The motion for reform brought forward by Mr Grey, was negatived by a majority of 282 to 41. The threats of revolution immediately subsided; the threatened convulsions disappeared; and a measure, which it was confidently predicted would for ever alienate the higher from the lower orders, was succeeded by a degree of unanimity between them, in the most difficult times, such as had never before been witnessed in the

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11.

It is rejected
by the
House of
Commons.

ciently strong, from the tenor of the acts which had been passed since the Revolution, which went rather to enlarge than abridge the liberty of the subject; that any further concession, therefore, would necessarily have the effect of overloading the balance on the popular side, and endangering the monarchical institutions of the state; that it was in vain to refer to early times for a precedent in support of a further extension of the elective franchise, since the state of society was then essentially different from what it now is; that the power of the sword was then vested in the feudal barons, and the country was overspread with their armed retainers; whereas now the progress of wealth, and the invention of fire-arms, had destroyed this formidable power, while the increase of manufactures had augmented to a very great degree the power of the middle ranks, and the diffusion of knowledge had increased tenfold their practical influence: that it might be quite safe to require representatives for all the boroughs, when the commons were a humble class in the state, and began their petitions with the words, "For God's sake, and as an act of mercy," while it would be highly dangerous to adopt a similar course, when the numbers of that class exceeded that of the agriculturists, and their wealth overbalanced that of all the other orders in the state; that the example of the Long Parliament sufficiently demonstrated that concession to popular clamours only led to fresh demands, and conducted, by an irresistible progress, to anarchy and revolution; that the fatal consequences which had recently attended the duplication of the *Tiers Etat*, the parliamentary reform of France, was a signal example of the effects of that concession to democratic ambition which was now so loudly called for; that the King there yielded up all the prerogatives of his crown, and the nobles had made a voluntary surrender of their whole titles, rights, and privileges, and the consequence was, that the commons became irresistible, and the one was brought to an ignominious death, and the other rewarded by exile, confiscation, and the scaffold; that the rotten boroughs, so much the object of invective, were, in truth, the most important part of the British constitution, and that which alone had, contrary to all former experience, so long maintained the balance of the three estates, because they gave a direct influence to property in the Legislature, and enabled the increasing wealth of the aristocracy to maintain its ground against the growing influence of the commons; that an inlet was thus provided to Parliament for men of talent, which had proved the means of introduction to our greatest statesmen, and which, if closed, would degrade its character, and convert the representatives of the people into the mere supporters of separate interests; that it was in vain to expect, in the present period of excitement, and with the example of successful revolt in France, that wealth could permanently influence the lower orders, or maintain its ground, if deprived of this constitutional channel in the House of Commons; that reform, therefore, would necessarily lead to revolution, and what revolution led to, need not be told to those who had witnessed the Reign of Terror; that the hope of attaching a large portion of the lower orders, by the extension of the elective franchise, however specious in theory, would prove fallacious in practice, because they would soon find that their votes, from their great multiplication, were of no value; that they had been deceived by the name of a privilege of no real service,

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¹ Ann. Reg.
1793, p.
153—165.
Parl. Hist.
xxx. p. 787,
923—925.

British empire. And thus, at the very time that the French nobility, by yielding to the demand for concession, and surrendering all their privileges, brought on the Revolution in that country, the British aristocracy, by steadily resisting innovation, prevented it in theirs: a memorable example to succeeding ages, of the effect of firmness and decision on the part of Parliament in stilling the violence of popular agitation, and checking the growth of democratic ambition; and a proof how different the clamour of the press, of public meetings,¹ and popular

and that the only way to obtain any practical benefit from their exertions, was to league with the inferior classes for a general spoliation of the higher; that this was the natural tendency of the lower orders in all wealthy states, because union with the higher afforded no immediate advantage, whereas a league with those lower than themselves gave the prospect of a division of property, and liberation from burdens, and was, in an especial manner, to be apprehended in Britain at this time, both because the public burdens were so excessive, property so unequally divided, and the example of a successful division of estates in France so recent; that a reform in Parliament, unlike all other ameliorations, was to the last degree dangerous, because it was the voluntary surrender of legislative power to the lower orders, which could never be recovered, and a false step, once taken, was irretrievable; that, supposing there were some defects in the constitution indefensible in theory, it could not be disputed that, in practice, it had proved the best protection to the rights and interests of all classes that had ever existed in the world; that, least of all, could the manufacturing or commercial bodies complain that their interests were not duly attended to in Parliament, since the whole policy of the state, for above a century, had been directed, perhaps too exclusively, to their advantage; that the representation which the great colonial, commercial, and shipping interests, now obtained by means of the purchase of close boroughs, would be annihilated if this mode of entering Parliament were closed; that thus, the real effect of reform would be to vest the supreme power in the mob of England, to the exclusion of all the great and varied interests which had risen up over the whole globe in the British dependencies; that such a state of things had proved fatal to all former republics, and could not fail speedily to lead to the dismemberment of the British empire; that if corruption were the evil that was really apprehended, no mode of increasing it could be so effectual as diminishing the close boroughs, where it existed from the paucity of inhabitants on the smallest, and increasing the middling ones, where experience had proved bribery was practised on the most extensive scale; that any reform would thus diminish the private to increase the venal boroughs; that, as it was evident wealth could maintain its ground in the contest with numbers, only by means of the expenditure of money, it was incomparably better that this necessary influence should be exerted in the decent retirement of antiquated boroughs, than in the shameless prostitution of great cities; that the danger of revolution, so strongly urged on the other side, in fact only existed if the reform measure was carried, inasmuch as history demonstrated, that no convulsions had ever shaken the English monarchy but those which emanated from the House of Commons; that it was rash measures of legislation which were alone to be dreaded, and words spoken from authority that set the world on fire; that the constitution had now, by accident, or more probably by the providence of God, become adapted to the curious and complicated interests of the British empire, and had enjoyed a degree of stability unknown to free institutions in any former age; and therefore nothing could be more rash or culpable than to run the risk of destroying so venerable a fabric, under which so much practical benefit had been experienced, in the pursuit of imaginary, and hitherto unattainable perfection.

orators, often is from the sober judgment of a really free people.

As the agitation of the Jacobin Clubs, however, still continued, and societies, in imitation of the Parent Institution in Paris, were rapidly forming in all the great towns of the kingdom, a bill against correspondence with France was passed by Parliament, notwithstanding the utmost resistance by the opposition, and prosecutions were commenced both in Scotland and England against the most violent of the demagogues. Some of them were clearly necessary; the expedience of others, especially in Scotland, was more than doubtful, at least to the extent to which punishment was carried against generous, and often well-meaning, though dangerous and deluded men.* Those vindictive measures on the part of government are seldom really beneficial, which excite the sympathy of the humane as well as the turbulent, and convert the transient ebullition of popular feeling into the lasting bitterness of political hatred. The true course in periods of public excitement, is firmness without severity; steady defiance of revolutionary intimidation, but cautious consideration of real evils; decided resistance to needless innovation, but careful abstinence from individual oppression.¹

The internal tranquillity of the British empire being thus provided for, the government took the most vigorous measures which the limited extent of their military resources would permit, to strengthen the Grand Army on the Continent. A corps, consisting of twenty thousand English, was embarked, and landed in Holland, under the command of the Duke of York, and being united to ten thousand Hanoverians and Hessians, formed a total of thirty thousand men in the British pay. The French Convention, early in the year, had ordered a levy of three hundred thousand men; but these troops could not come into the field till April. The present forces of the Allies consisted of three hundred and sixty-five thousand men, acting on the whole circumference of France, from Calais to Bayonne, while those of the Republicans amounted to two hundred and seventy thousand, for the most part of

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12.
Bills against
correspon-
dence with
France, and
prosecu-
tions for
sedition and
treason.

¹ Parl. De-
bates, xxx.
p. 615, 620.

13.
Prepara-
tions for war
by Great
Britain and
the Allies.
20th April.

24th Feb.

* Some of these were transported fourteen years for conspiracy and sedition, without any overt act of high treason.—*State Trials in Scotland*, i. 351, 417.

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1 Jom. vi.
49, 52.14.
Vast effect
of the exe-
cution of
Louis in
England.

inferior quality, but possessing the advantages of unity of language, government, and public feeling, besides the important circumstance of acting in an interior and concentric circle, which enabled one corps rapidly to communicate with and support another, while the troops of the Allies, scattered over a much larger circumference, were deprived of that advantage.^{1*}

No difficulty was experienced by government in getting Parliament to agree to any measures which were deemed necessary to avert from the British shores the scourge of revolutionary convulsion. The execution of Louis produced a profound and universal impression in Great Britain. Nothing, since the time when the head of Charles I. fell under the axe of the Long Parliament, had ever produced so general and mournful a feeling. It was hard to say whether the sturdy old Tories or the ardent Liberals of the new school, received the intelligence with most consternation. The former beheld in this event the clearest confirmation of their dismal forebodings, and the realisation of their worst predictions: the latter, the overthrow of long-cherished hopes, the blasting of impassioned and

* The relative strength of the forces on the opposite sides in July 1793, was as follows:—

ALLIES.	
Imperialists in Belgium,	50,000
Austrians on the Rhine,	40,000
On the Meuse,	33,000
Prussians in Belgium,	12,000
Prussians and Saxons on the Rhine,	65,000
Dutch,	20,000
English, Hanoverians, and Hessians,	30,000
Austrians and Piedmontese, in Piedmont,	45,000
Spaniards,	50,000
Forces of the Empire and Emigrants,	20,000
Total,	365,000
FRENCH.	
In Belgium and Holland,	30,000
Before Maestricht and in the Limbourg,	70,000
On the Moselle,	25,000
At Mayence,	45,000
On the Upper Rhine,	30,000
In Savoy and Nice,	40,000
In the Interior,	30,000
Total,	270,000

The French, however, had the superiority in the field till the end of April; from that time till the end of August, the Allies had the advantage, after which, from the great levies of the Republicans coming forward, they resumed the ascendancy, which went on continually increasing till the close of the campaign, and was never lost till the memorable campaign of 1799.—Jomini, iii. 51, 52, 53.

sanguine expectations. It was impossible any longer to represent the popular cause in France as that of justice and philanthropy, when the first sacrifice to which it had led had been that of their upright and beneficent monarch, whose only fault had been an imprudent zeal for the public good, and only weakness an unconquerable aversion to the shedding of blood. It was now apparent that the boasted regeneration of society had purified it of none of its vices; and that the philanthropic movement of the philosophers was to terminate in the usual atrocities of bloodshed, massacre, and confiscation. Indescribable was the effect which this impression produced on all classes in the British Isles, from the throne to the cottage. By a spontaneous feeling, the House of Commons, on the night on which the melancholy intelligence was discussed in Parliament, on Feb. 1. occasion of the royal message for an augmentation of the forces, assembled in mourning. One or two alone appeared in coloured dress, who afterwards bore a conspicuous part in English history as the leaders of the great movement which terminated in the Revolution of 1832.*

The impression made at St Petersburg by the execution of Louis was fully as vivid as at London: already it was evident that these two capitals were the centres of the great contest which was approaching. No sooner did the melancholy intelligence reach the Empress Catharine than she instantly took the most decisive measures: all Frenchmen were ordered to quit her territories within three weeks, if they did not renounce the principles of the Revolution, and all correspondence with their relations in that country: and it was publicly announced, that the great fleet of Cronstadt, with forty thousand men on board, should, early in spring, unite itself to the British navy, to pursue measures in common against the enemies of humanity. The efforts of the Czarine had been incessant and energetic to organise an alliance capable of restraining the progress of revolutionary principles. With that view she had restrained the uplifted arm of conquest over Gustavus III. of Sweden in 1790; and hardly were her troops disengaged from their Turkish enemies on the banks of the Danube, by the peace of Jassy in 1792, than she made arrangements for transporting the Muscovite legions to the heart of Germany.¹

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15.
Effect of the
death of
Louis at St
Petersburg.

¹ Hard. ii.
191, 192.

* Mr, afterwards Earl, Grey was in coloured dress.

- CHAP. Nor did these energetic resolutions evaporate in mere
XIII. empty words, on the part of the cabinet either of St
1793. Petersburg or St James's.¹ An intimate and confidential
16. correspondence immediately commenced between Count
Treaty be- Woronzoff, the Russian ambassador at London, and Lord
tween Eng- Grenville, the British secretary of state for foreign affairs,
land and Russia, which terminated in a treaty between the two powers,
March 25. signed in London on the 25th March. By this convention,
which laid the basis of the grand alliance which afterwards
brought the war to a glorious termination, it was provided
that the two powers should "employ their respective
forces, as far as circumstances shall permit, in carrying on
the just and necessary war in which they find themselves
engaged against France; and they reciprocally engage not
to lay down their arms without restitution of all the con-
quests which France may have made upon either of the
respective powers, or upon such other states or allies to
whom, by common consent, they shall extend the benefit
of this treaty." They agreed, also, to shut their ports
against France, and not permit the export of any naval
stores to that power, "and to unite all their efforts to pre-
vent other powers not implicated in this war from giving,
on this occasion of common concern to every civilised state,
any protection whatever, in consequence of their neutrality,
to the commerce or property of the French, on the sea, or
in the ports of France." The existing commercial treaties
were at the same time, by a separate convention, ratified
and confirmed between the two powers.¹
- Shortly after, a similar convention was entered into
between Great Britain and Sardinia, by which the latter
power was to receive an annual subsidy of £200,000 during
the whole continuance of the war, and the former to keep
on foot an army of fifty thousand men; and the English
government engaged to procure for it entire restitution of
its dominions as they stood at the commencement of the
war. By another convention with the cabinet of Madrid,
signed at Aranjuez on the 25th of May, they engaged not
to make peace till they had obtained full restitution for
the Spaniards "of all places, towns, and territories which
belonged to them at the commencement of the war, and
which the enemy may have taken during its continuance."
- 12th July. A similar treaty was entered into with the court of the two

¹ Parl. Hist.
xxx. 1082,
and Hard.
ii. 198.
Martens, v.
433, 439.

17.
And with
Sardinia,
Prussia,
Naples, and
Spain.
25th April.

25th May.

Sicilies, and with Prussia, in which the clauses, prohibiting all exportation to France, and preventing the trade of neutrals with it, were the same as in the Russian treaty. Treaties of the same tenor were concluded in the course of the summer with the Emperor of Germany and the King of Portugal. Thus was all Europe arrayed in a great league against Republican France, and thus did the regicides of that country, as the first-fruits of their cruel triumph, find themselves excluded from the pale of civilised nations. It will appear in the sequel, how many, and what unheard of disasters broke up this great confederacy: how courageous some were in adhering to their engagements; how weak and dastardly others were in deserting them; and how firmly and nobly Great Britain alone persevered to the end, and never laid down her arms till she had accomplished all the objects of the war, and fulfilled to the very letter all the obligations she had contracted to any, even the humblest, of the allied powers.¹

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1793.

14th July,

30th Aug.

26th Sept.

¹ Martens, v.

469, 473,

483, 519.

Parl. Hist.

xxx. 1032,

1034, 1042,

1058.

But while all Europe thus resounded with the note of military preparation against France, Russia had other and more interested designs in view. Amidst the general consternation at the triumphs of the French republicans, Catharine conceived that she would be permitted to pursue, without molestation, her ambitious designs against Poland. She constantly represented the disturbances in that kingdom as the fruit of revolutionary propagandism, which it was indispensable to crush in the first instance; and it was easy to see that it was for the banks of the Vistula, not the Seine, that her military preparations were, in the outset at least, intended. The ambitious views of Prussia were also, as will fully appear in the sequel, strongly turned in the same direction; and thus, in the very commencement of a war which required the concentrated effort of all Europe, and might by such an effort have been speedily brought to a successful termination, were the principal powers already distracted by separate interests, and unjustifiable projects of individual aggrandisement.²

18.

Secret designs of
Russia.

² Hard. ii.

198, 199.

Nor was it only the ambitious projects of Russia and Prussia against the independence of Poland, which already gave ground for gloomy augury as to the issue of the war. Its issue was more immediately affected by the jealousy of Austria and Prussia, which now broke out in the most un-

19.

Divisions
between the
Prussians
and Austri-
ans.

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disguised manner, and occasioned such a division of the allied forces as effectually prevented any cordial or effective co-operation continuing to exist between them. The Prussian cabinet, mortified at the lead which the Imperial generals took in the common operations, insisted upon the formation of two independent German armies; one composed of Prussians, the other of Austrians, to one or other of which the forces of all the minor states should be joined: those of Saxony, Hanover, and Hesse being grouped round the standards of Prussia; those of Bavaria, Wirtemberg, Swabia, the Palatinate, and Franconia, following the double-headed eagles of Austria. By this means, all unity of action between the two grand allied armies was broken up, at the very time when it was most required to meet the desperate and concentrated energy of revolutionary power; while the zeal of all the subordinate nations was irretrievably cooled at finding themselves thus parcelled out between the two great military powers, whose pre-eminence already gave them so much disquietude, and compelled against their will to serve under the standards of empires from whom many of them apprehended greater danger than from the common enemy.¹

¹ Hard. ii.
200, 202.

20.
Wretched
state of the
French
armies at
the com-
mencement
of the cam-
paign.

But though such seeds of weakness existed among the allied powers, the immediate danger was to all appearance much greater to France. Though their armies in Flanders were, in the commencement of the campaign, superior to those of the Allies, they were in the most deplorable state of insubordination, and miserably deficient in every species of equipment. The artillery horses had in great part perished during the severity of a winter campaign; the clothing of the soldiers was worn out; their spirit had disappeared during the license of Republican conquest. The disorganisation was complete in every department; the artillery stores, the commissariat, the cavalry horses, were deficient; discipline was wanting among the soldiers, concord among the chiefs. France then experienced the weakness arising from revolutionary license, and which is common to all really democratic states. She regained her strength under the stern despotism of the Reign of Terror, when the Committee of Public Salvation wielded a power tenfold greater than Louis XIV. had ever enjoyed, and enforced with a rigour unknown to Caligula or Nero.²

² Toul. iii.
230. Jomi-
ni, iii. 49,
52.

Prince Cobourg was appointed generalissimo of the Allied armies from the Rhine to the German Ocean. The great abilities displayed by Clairfait, in repairing the disasters of the preceding campaign, pleaded in vain for his continuance in the command at a court not yet taught by disaster to disregard influence and promote only merit. His successor had served under the Imperial banners against the Turks, and shared in the glories of the campaigns of Suwarroff. But the Austrian commander was far from possessing the vigour or capacity of the conqueror of Ismacl. Adhering with obstinate perseverance to the system of dividing his forces, and covering an immense tract of country with communications, he frittered away the vast army placed at his disposal, and permitted the fairest opportunity ever offered, of striking a decisive blow against the rising Republic, to pass away without any important event. He belonged to the old methodical school of Lacey; was destitute of either decision or character; and, from the tardiness of his operations, was the general of all others least qualified to combat the fire and energy of a revolution.¹

To support the prodigious expense of a war on all their frontiers, and on so great a scale, would greatly have exceeded the ordinary and legitimate resources of the French government. But, contrary alike to precedent and anticipation, they derived from the miseries and convulsions of the Revolution the means of new and unparalleled resources. The ordinary pacific expenditure of 1792, covered by taxes, the sale of ecclesiastical property, and patriotic gifts, amounted to 958,000,000 francs, or about £40,000,000 sterling. But so immensely had the charges of the war augmented the national embarrassments, that the expense of the last period of the year was at the rate of 200,000,000 francs, or £8,000,000 a-month. On the day on which war was declared, assignats to the enormous amount of 1,000,000,000 francs (£40,000,000) were struck off at the public treasury. But the period was now arrived when all calculation in matters of finance was to cease; for all exigencies the inexhaustible mine of assignats, possessing a forced circulation, and issued on the credit of the national domains, proved sufficient. When any want was felt in the treasury, the demands were paid by a

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21.

Prince Co-
bourg ap-
pointed ge-
neralissimo
of the Allies.

¹ Jom. iii.
62. Hard.
ii. 204, 205.

22.

Vast efforts
of France.

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1 Toul. iii.
248, 250.
Hist. Parl.
xxiv. 132,
137.

23.
Mr Pitt's
financial
measures.

2 Parl. Hist.
xxx. 972.

24.
Designs of
Dumourier,
and of the
Allied gene-
rals.

fresh issue of paper; and this fictitious currency, the source of boundless private ruin in France, sustained singly, during the first years of the revolutionary wars, the public credit. In the Finance Report for 1793, Cambon declared that the expenses of that year could admit of no exact calculation, but that the nation must rise superior to its financial, as it had already risen above its military difficulties; and therefore he proposed the immediate issue of 800,000,000 of francs, or upwards of £33,000,000, in assignats, on the security of the national domains, which was immediately agreed to. These domains he valued at eight milliards, or about £350,000,000 sterling; of which three milliards, or £130,000,000, had been consumed or impledged by previous issues—an extraordinary proof of the length to which the confiscation of private property had already been carried under the revolutionary government.¹

To meet the exigencies of the year in the British Parliament, Mr Pitt proposed a loan of £4,500,000, besides the ordinary supplies of the year, the interest of which was provided for by additional taxes; and from these resources the subsidies already mentioned were granted to the King of Sardinia, and several of the smaller German powers. At the same time an issue of L.5,000,000 was voted to relieve the commercial embarrassment which had been most severely felt on the breaking out of the war; and such was the effect of this well-timed supply, that credit was speedily restored, and little, if any, of this large sum ultimately lost to the state—a striking example of the beneficial effect of liberal support by government, even in the darkest periods of public suffering.²

In January 1793, Dumourier came to Paris, in order to endeavour to rouse the Girondist party to save the life of Louis. This movement, while it failed in its object of preserving the King, for ever alienated the Jacobins from the general. The consequences of this misunderstanding were important upon the future fate of the campaign. Dumourier's plan, which he had been meditating during the whole winter, was to commence operations by an invasion of Holland; to revolutionise that country, unite it with the provinces of Flanders, as has since been done in 1814, raise an army of eighty thousand men, with this force move upon Paris, and, without the aid of any other

power, dictate laws to the Convention, and restore tranquillity to France. It is one of the most extraordinary signs of those days of revolution and confusion, that so wild a project should have been seriously undertaken by a man of his acute understanding. On the other hand, the project of the Allies was to drive the Republicans beyond the Meuse, and disengage the important fortress of Maestricht; next invest and regain the city of Mayence, the key of the Rhine, and then unite their victorious forces for the deliverance of Flanders. The design, in general, was well conceived; but the details prescribed for the recovery of the Low Countries were vitiated by that division of force, and mutual jealousy of the commanders, which so long proved ruinous to the allied armies. To carry into execution his project, Dumourier, early in the season, Feb. 5. collected a body of about twenty thousand men at Antwerp, with a view to an attack on Rotterdam. Shortly after Feb. 17. his troops entered the Dutch territory, and established themselves between Breda and Bergen-op-zoom. At first his efforts were attended with unlooked-for success; after a siege of three days, and when the French were on the point of retiring for want of ammunition, Breda, with a garrison of twenty-five hundred men, capitulated. This advantage was speedily followed by the reduction of Gertruydenberg, after a trifling resistance; and siege was immediately laid to Williamstadt. The French forces, encamped in straw March 3. huts on the shores of the branch of the sea called the Brisboes, were only waiting for the collection of boats sufficient to convey across the troops, in order to undertake the siege of Dort, when information was received by the general, on the night of the 8th March, of events in other quarters of Flanders, which immediately led to the abandonment of this ill-conceived enterprise.¹

While Dumourier was absent with part of his forces in Holland, Miranda was prosecuting the siege of Maestricht, though with forces totally inadequate to so great an undertaking. But while the French were still reposing in fancied security in their cantonments, the Imperialists were taking active measures to raise the siege. Fifty-two thousand men had been assembled under Prince Cobourg, with whom was the young ARCHDUKE CHARLES, brother

¹ Jom. iii. 64, 85.
Toul. iii. 282.
Dum. iv. 4, 14.

25.
Archduke Charles joins the army.
Repeated disasters of the Republicans.

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

March 2 and
3.

March 6.

March 8.

¹ Toul. iii.
270. Jom.
iii. 86, 94,
99. Ib. iii.
96, 99.

26.
Great sen-
sation pro-
duced by
them in
Flanders,
and efforts
of Dumou-
rier.

of the Emperor Francis,* at the head of the grenadiers. On the 1st and 2d March, the Austrians along the whole line attacked the French cantonments, and, after an inconsiderable resistance, succeeded in driving them back, and in many points throwing them into utter confusion. The discouragement which has so often been observed to seize the French troops on the first considerable reverse, got possession of the soldiers; whole battalions fled in confusion into France; officers quitted their troops, soldiers disbanded from their officers; the siege of Maestricht was raised, the heavy artillery sent back in haste towards Brussels, and the army driven in disorder beyond the Meuse, with the loss of seven thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. On the 4th March, the Republicans were again routed near Liege, and a large portion of the heavy artillery abandoned under that city; a few days after, Tongres was carried by the Archduke Charles, at the head of twelve thousand men; and the whole army fell back upon Tirlemont, and thence to Louvain, where Dumourier arrived from the Dutch frontier, and resumed the command. The Imperialists then desisted from the pursuit, satisfied with their first success, and not deeming themselves sufficiently strong to force the united corps of the French army in that city.¹

The intelligence of these repeated disasters produced the utmost sensation in the whole of Flanders. The Republican party, already disgusted with the exactions and plunder of the French commissioners, now found themselves threatened with the immediate vengeance of their sovereign, and chastisement from the allied forces. The decree of the Convention, uniting the Flemish pro-

* Charles Louis de Lorraine, Archduke Charles, second brother of the Emperor Francis, was born on the 15th September 1771, so that, when he first entered on the career of arms under Prince Cobourg in May 1793, he was not yet twenty-two years of age. His great abilities, not less than exalted rank, rapidly procured his elevation in command. After the battle of Nerwinde, which restored that rich province to the Imperial power, he was appointed governor of the Low Countries, and was soon after created a field-marshal. In April 1796, he was promoted, on the retirement of Clairfait, to the command of the Imperial armies in Germany, where his military abilities, as will appear in the sequel, shone forth with the highest lustre, and which laid the foundation of his great military reputation. His character will come more fitly to be drawn in a subsequent volume, when his great exploits have been recounted, as well as advantage taken of the luminous and impartial narrative he has left of his campaigns, and the profound views with which he has enriched the science of strategy.—*Vide Infra*, c. xxviii. § 92, 93; *Biographie des Contemporains*, ii. 131.

vinces to the French Republic, had excited the utmost discontent in the whole country; the spoliation of the churches, forced requisitions, imprisonments, and abuses of every kind, which had gone on during the winter, had roused such a universal spirit of resistance, that a general insurrection was hourly expected, and a body of ten thousand peasants had already assembled in the neighbourhood of Ghent, and defeated the detachments of the garrison of that city which had been sent against them. To endeavour to remedy these disorders, and restore the shaken attachment of the Flemings, was the first care of Dumourier. For this purpose he had a conference at Louvain, shortly after his arrival, with Camus, and the other Commissioners of the Convention; but it ended in nothing but mutual recriminations. Dumourier reproached them with having authorised and permitted the exactions and disorders which had roused such a ferment in the conquered provinces; and they retaliated by accusing him of entertaining designs subversive of the liberty of the people. It concluded thus: "General," said Camus, "you are accused of wishing to become Cæsar: could I feel assured of it, I would act the part of Brutus, and stab you to the heart."—"My dear Camus," replied he, "I am neither Cæsar, nor are you Brutus; and the menace you have uttered, is, to me, a passport to immortality." Dumourier found the army, which, notwithstanding the detachment of twenty thousand men in Holland, twelve thousand at Namur, and five thousand in another direction, was still forty-five thousand strong, including four thousand five hundred cavalry, in the utmost state of disorder; the confusion of defeat having been superadded to that of Republican license. He immediately reorganised it in a different manner, and, in order to restore the confidence of the soldiers, resolved to commence offensive operations. In a few days, the French advanced guard defeated the Austrians near Tirlemont, with the loss of twelve hundred men; an event which immediately restored confidence to the whole army, and confirmed the General in his resolution to risk a general action.¹

The Imperialists had thirty-nine thousand men, of whom nine thousand were horse, posted near Tirlemont. Resolved not to decline a combat, they concentrated their forces along a position, about two leagues in length, near

CHAP.
XIII.
1793.

March 13.

¹ Dum. iv.
66, 67, 80,
81. Toul.
iii. 272.

27
Battle of
Nerwinde.

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

March 18.

¹ Prince
Cobourg's
Despatch,
Dum. iv. 88,
97. Jom.
iii. 105, 110.
Toul. iii.
279.

28.
Defeat of
the French.

the village of NERWINDE. The left, commanded by the Archduke Charles, was posted across the *chaussée* leading to Tirlémont; the right, under the orders of Clairfait, extended towards Landau; the centre, in two lines, was under the command of General Colloredo and the Prince of Wirtemberg. On the other hand, the French army was divided into eight columns; three of which, under Valence, were destined to attack the right; two, under the Duke of Chartres, to force the centre; and three, under Miranda, to overwhelm the left. The action began by an attack on the Austrian left, by the troops under the command of Miranda, which advanced in dense columns, and at first succeeded in carrying the villages immediately in front of their position; but the Austrians having directed a severe and concentric fire of artillery on that point, the advance of the masses was checked, and disorder and irresolution introduced into their ranks. Meanwhile, the village of Nerwinde was carried by the Republicans in the centre, but was shortly after regained by the Austrians, and after being frequently taken and retaken, it was finally evacuated by the French, who were unable to sustain the severe and incessant fire of the Imperial artillery.¹

Dumourier, upon this, formed his line a hundred yards in rear of the village, when the Austrians immediately pushed on and assailed the infantry by two columns of cuirassiers: but the first was repulsed by the murderous fire of grape from the French artillery; and the second checked, after a severe engagement, by the Republican cavalry. The combat now ceased on the right and centre; but on the left affairs had taken a very different turn. The French, under Miranda, there endeavoured in vain to debouch from the villages which they had occupied; the heads of their columns, as fast as they presented themselves, were swept off by the fire of the Austrian artillery, placed on the heights immediately behind; and shortly after, the Archduke Charles, at the head of two battalions, stormed the villages; and Prince Cobourg, perceiving this to be the important point, attacked the French columns, with a small body of cavalry and infantry, under the Duke of Wirtemberg, in flank, while the Archduke pressed their front. The result was, that the French right wing was routed, and would have been totally destroyed, had the

Duke of Wirtemberg charged with the whole forces under his command, instead of the inconsiderable part which achieved this important success. The Republicans, however, alarmed at this disaster, retired from the field of battle, and regained, with some difficulty, the ground they had occupied before the engagement. In this battle, the Austrians lost two thousand men, and the French two thousand five hundred killed and wounded, and fifteen hundred prisoners; but it decided the fate of the campaign. Dumourier, aided by the young Duke of Chartres, conducted the retreat in the evening with much ability, and in good order, without being seriously disquieted by their enemies. A few days after the Austrians advanced, and on the 22d, under cover of a thick mist, made an unexpected attack on the French rearguard; but they were repulsed, after a trifling success, with loss.¹

The position of the French commander, however, was now extremely critical. To conduct a long retreat with discouraged troops, in the face of a victorious enemy, is at all times dangerous; but it was in an especial manner so at that juncture, in consequence of the undisciplined state of a large part of his forces, and the undisguised manner in which the volunteers left their colours upon the first serious reverse. The National Guards openly declared that they had taken up arms to save their country, not to get themselves massacred in Belgium; and whole companies and battalions, with their arms and baggage, went off in a body towards the French frontier. To such a height did the discouragement arrive, that within a few days after the battle, six thousand men had left their colours, and disbanded, spreading dismay over all the roads leading to France. Naturally brave and active, the French troops are the best in the world to advance and gain conquests; but they have not, till inured by discipline and experience, the steadiness requisite to preserve them; and by the threatened defection of the volunteer corps, Dumourier was exposed to the loss of more than half his army, while the open plains of Flanders, now destitute of fortified places, offered no points of defence capable of arresting the progress of a victorious army. Influenced by these considerations, the French general every where prepared for a retreat. Orders were dispatched to General Harville to

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1793.

¹ Dum. iv.
88, 90, 97,
101. Journ.
iii. 105, 111,
113, 117.
Toul. iii.
279, 283, 290,
293.

29.
Disorganisa-
tion of
the French
army, and
retreat of
Dumourier.

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

throw a garrison of two thousand men into the citadel of Namur, and move with the remainder of his corps, consisting of twelve thousand men, towards Brussels, while the troops advanced, by the imprudent invasion of Holland, as far as Gertruydenberg and Breda, were directed to retire upon Antwerp and Mechlin. Prince Cobourg in vain urged the Dutch and Prussian troops to disquiet their retreat; contenting themselves with investing Breda and Gertruydenberg, they remained, with a force of thirty thousand men, in a state of perfect inaction.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
121, 125.
Dum. iv.
98, 104,
105, 115.

30.
Convention
with Prince
Cobourg.

March 23.

Shortly after conferences were opened between Dumourier and the Austrian generals, in virtue of which it was agreed that the French should retire behind Brussels, without being disquieted in their retreat. It soon appeared how essential such an arrangement was to the Republican arms. On the following day, Clairfait, who was ignorant of the convention, attacked General Lamarche, who fell back in confusion behind Louvain, and left an opening in the retreating columns, which, with a more enterprising enemy, might have been attended with ruinous results. The troops then gave themselves up to despair, and openly threatened to disband; a striking proof of the little reliance that can be placed on any but regular and disciplined soldiers, during the vicissitudes of fortune unavoidable in war, and in an especial manner, of the danger of trusting to levies got together during the fervour of a revolution. Dumourier himself has confessed, that his troops were in such a state of disorder, that, if vigorously pressed, they must have been totally annihilated in the long retreat which lay before them, before they regained the French frontiers. Yet so ignorant was the Austrian commander of the condition of his adversary, that he was unaware of a state of debility, confusion, and weakness, which was notorious to every peasant who beheld his retreating columns. In virtue of the convention, the French army, without further delay, evacuated Brussels and Mechlin, and retired in good order, by Halle, Mons, and Ath, towards the French frontier. At the same time, the Republicans retired along the whole line from Gertruydenberg to Namur, and withdrew the garrison from the citadel of the latter place.¹

March 25
and 26.

² Toul. iii.
295. Dum.
iv. 109, 111.
Jom. iii. 126,
127. Hard.
ii. 241, 251.

But it soon appeared that in these movements Dumou-

rier had more than mere military objects in view. It was at Ath, on the 27th March, that the first conference of a political nature took place, and it was verbally agreed between the French commander and Colonel Mack, on the part of the Imperialists, "That the French army should repose a little at Mons and Tournay without being disquieted, and that Dumourier, who was to judge of the proper time for marching to Paris, should regulate the movements of the Austrians, who were to act only as auxiliaries; that if he could not, by his single forces, effect the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, he should fix upon the amount of the Allied Forces which he would require: and that the fortress of Condé should be placed in the hands of the Imperialists as a guarantee, to be restored to France after a general peace. Having thus embarked in the perilous undertaking of overturning the republican and establishing a monarchical government, Dumourier's first care was to secure the fortresses, upon which the success of his enterprise depended. But here his ill fortune began. The officer whom he dispatched to take possession of Lisle, suffered himself to be made the dupe of the commander of that place, and led a prisoner into the fortress; the garrisons of Condé and Valenciennes successfully resisted his attempts to bring them over to the constitutional party; and the Convention taking the alarm, dispatched Camus, and three other commissioners, with the minister at war, Bournonville, with orders to the General to appear at the bar of the Convention, and answer for his conduct. After an angry discussion, the particulars of which have been already given,* Dumourier arrested the deputies, and delivered them over to the Austrians; but he was speedily deserted by his own soldiers, narrowly escaped being made prisoner by a detachment of grenadiers faithful to the Convention, commanded by Davoust, and obliged to fly from his camp at St Amand, and take refuge, with fifteen hundred fol-

lowers, in the Austrian lines. Restrained either by a sense of honour arising from the recent convention, or by the inherent slowness of their disposition, the Austrians made no attempt to improve the opportunity afforded by the defection of the French commander.¹ The Repub-

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XIII.

1793.

31

Political designs, failure, and flight of Dumourier.

¹ Hard. ii.
217, 219.
Toul. iii.
308, 319.
Jom. iii.
132, 135,
137, 152.

* Ante, c. xi. § 23, 24.

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XIII.

1793.
April 5.

licans were permitted quietly to retire to Valenciennes, Lisle, and Condé; a considerable number formed an intrenched camp at Fankars, where, by orders of the Convention, General Dampierre assumed the command, and sedulously endeavoured to restore the discipline and revive the spirit which so many disasters had greatly weakened among the soldiers.

32.
Congress at
Antwerp to
decide on
the con-
duct of
the war.

A congress was assembled at Antwerp of the ministers of the allied powers, which was attended by Counts Metternich* and Stahrenberg on the part of Austria, Lord Auckland on that of England, and Count Keller on that of Prussia. Such was the confidence inspired by recent events, that these ministers all imagined that the last days of the Convention were at hand: and in truth they were so, if the allied cabinets had communicated a little more vigour and unanimity into the military operations. Inspired by these ideas, and irritated at the total failure of Dumourier's attempt to subvert the anarchical rule in that country, the plenipotentiaries came to the resolution of totally altering the object of the war, and the necessity was now openly announced of providing *indemnities and securities* for the allied powers; in other words, partitioning the frontier territories of France among the invading states. The effect of this resolution was immediately conspicuous in a proclamation which Prince Cobourg issued to the French people, in which he openly disavowed, on the part of his government, those resolutions to abstain from all aggrandisement which he had announced only a few days before, and declared that he was ordered to prosecute the contest by might of arms with all the forces at his disposal.† The effects of this unhappy resolution

1 Hard. ii.
238, 241.

* Father of the great statesman of the same name, who rose to such eminence during the Revolutionary war.

† In his first proclamation on 5th April, issued during the conferences with Dumourier, Cobourg declared, "Desirous only of securing the prosperity and glory of a country torn by so many convulsions, I declare that I shall support, with all the forces at my disposal, the generous and beneficent intentions of General Dumourier and his brave army. I declare that our only object is to restore to France its constitutional monarch, with the means of rectifying such experienced abuses as may exist, and to give to France, as to Europe, peace, confidence, tranquillity, and happiness. In conformity with these principles, I declare on my word of honour, that I enter on the French territory without any intention of making conquests, but solely and entirely for the above-mentioned purposes. I declare also on my word of honour, that, if military operations should lead to any place of strength being placed in my hands, I shall regard it in no other light than as a sacred deposit; and I bind myself in the most solemn manner to restore

were soon apparent. When Valenciennes and Condé were taken, the standard, not of Louis XVII., but of Austria, was hoisted on the walls, and the allied ministers already talked openly of indemnities for the past, and securities for the future.

No step in the early stages of the war was ever attended with more unfortunate consequences. It at once changed the character of the contest: converted it from one of liberation into one of aggrandisement, and gave the Jacobins of Paris too good reason for their assertion, that the dismemberment of the country was intended, and that all true citizens must join heart and hand in resisting the common enemy. The true principle to have adopted would have been that so strongly recommended by Mr Burke, and which afterwards proved so successful in the hands of Alexander and Wellington, viz. to have separated distinctly and emphatically the cause of France from that of the Jacobin faction which had enthralled it: to have guaranteed the integrity of the former, and denounced implacable hostility only against the latter; and thus afforded the means to the great body of patriotic citizens who were adverse to the sanguinary rule of the Convention, of extricating themselves at once from domestic tyranny and foreign subjugation.¹

The British contingent, twenty thousand strong, having landed at Rotterdam, the Allied army in Flanders, under Cobourg, was raised to above ninety thousand men, besides a detached corps of thirty thousand Austrians, stationed at Namur, Luxembourg, and Treves, to keep open the communication with the Prussian army destined to act against

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XIII.
1793.

33.
Disastrous
effects of the
system then
resolved on.

¹ Hard. H.
239, 241.
Burke, Reg.
Peace.

it to the government which may be established in France, or as soon as the brave general with whom I make common cause shall demand it." These are the principles of the true anti-revolutionary war; but they were strangely departed from in the proclamation issued a few days later by the same general, after the determination of the Congress at Antwerp had been taken. Prince Cobourg there said,—“The Proclamation of the 6th instant was the expression only of my personal sentiments; and I there announced my individual views for the safety and tranquillity of France. But now that the results of that declaration have proved so different from what I anticipated, the same candour obliges me to declare that the state of hostility between the Emperor and the French nation is unhappily re-established in its full extent. It remains for me, therefore, only to revoke my said declaration, and to announce that I shall prosecute the war with the utmost vigour. Nothing remains binding of my first proclamation, but the declaration, which I renew with pleasure, that the strictest discipline shall be observed by my troops in all parts of the French territory which they may occupy.” Stronger evidence of the unhappy change of system cannot be imagined.—See HARDENBERG, H. 231, 233, 241, 242.

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1793.

34.

Forces of
the Allies in
Flanders,
and defen-
sive mea-
sures of the
Convention.

Mayence. Alarmed at the great peril they had sustained by the defection of Dumourier, and by this vast accumulation of force, the Convention took the most vigorous measures to provide for the public safety. A camp of forty thousand men was ordered to form a reserve for the army; the levy of three hundred thousand men, ordered by the decree of 24th February, was directed to be hastened, and sixty representatives of the Convention were named, to serve as viceroys over the generals in all the armies. No less than twelve of these haughty Republicans were commanded to proceed to the army of the North. No limit existed to their authority; armed with the despotic powers of the Committee of Public Salvation, supported by a Republican and mutinous soldiery, they, with equal facility, placed the generals on a triumphal car, or dispatched them to the scaffold. Disposing with absolute sway of the lives and arms of several millions of Frenchmen, they were staggered by no losses, intimidated by no difficulties; to press on, and bear down opposition by the force of numbers, was the system on which they invariably acted; and, disposing with an unsparing hand of the blood of a bankrupt, but enthusiastic nation in arms, they found resources for the maintenance of such a murderous system of warfare, which never could have been commanded by any regular government.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
146, 151.

Toul. iv. 4.

35.

Defeats on
the Rhine of
Custine's
projects.

While these disastrous events were occurring on the northern, fortune was not more propitious to the arms of the Republic on its eastern frontier. The forces of the French in that quarter, at the opening of the campaign, were greatly overmatched by those of the Allies; between the Prussians and Austrians, there were not less than seventy-five thousand men on the Rhine in February, besides twenty thousand between Treves and the Meuse; while Custine had only forty-five thousand in the field, twenty-two thousand of these being under his immediate command, the remainder stationed on the Meuse; and the whole forces on the Upper Rhine, including the garrisons, did not exceed forty thousand, of whom not more than a half were available for service in the field. The campaign was opened, after some inconsiderable actions, on the 24th March, by the King of Prussia crossing the Rhine in great force at Rheinfels. An ineffectual resistance was attempted

March 24.

by the army of Custine, but the superiority of the Allied forces compelled him to fall back; and after some days' retreat, and several partial actions, he retired first to Landau, and thence behind the river Lauter, and took post in the famous lines of Weissenberg. Mayence was now left to its own resources, with a great train of heavy artillery, and a garrison of twenty thousand men; while Custine, whose force was augmented by the garrisons in Alsace to thirty-five thousand men, remained strictly on the defensive in the Vosges mountains and his fortified position.¹

The Allies immediately made preparations for the reduction of this great fortress; but, by an inconceivable fatuity, the superb siege equipage, which was on the road from Austria, was sent on to Valenciennes, while the supplies requisite for the attack on Mayence were brought from Holland, an exchange which occasioned great delays in both undertakings, and proved extremely injurious to the future progress of the allied arms. The garrison, though so numerous, was not furnished with the whole artillery requisite for arming the extensive works; but its spirit was excellent, and the most vigorous resistance was to be anticipated. Little progress took place in the operations during the first two months, and on the 17th May, a general attack was made on the covering force by Custine's army, supported by fourteen thousand men from the corps of the Moselle, under General Houchard. But the movements of the troops were ill combined; part of them were seized with a disgraceful panic, and the attack proved entirely abortive. After this failure, Custine was removed to the command of the Army of the North, now severely pressed by the allied forces near Valenciennes; and the forces in the lines of Weissenberg remained under the orders of Beauharnais, without attempting any thing of importance till a later period of the campaign. The inactivity and irresolution of the Allies in these operations, and the little advantage which they derived from their superiority of force, and the wretched condition of their opponents, proves how grievously they stood in need of a leader capable of conducting such a contest.²

At length the operations of the siege, long delayed from the tardiness in the approach of the heavy train, were pushed with activity. Trenches having been regularly

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

March 31.
1 Toul. iii.
322, 325.
Jom. iii.
187, 202,
205.

36.
Siege of
Mayence by
the Allies,
and defeat of
the attack
on the
covering
army.

May 17.

2 Toul. iv.
15, 16.
Jom. iii. 209,
213, 225.
Hard. ii. 257,
258, 259, 298.

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

37.

Fall of Mayence, and defeat of the French in attempting to raise the siege.
July 1.

constructed, fifteen batteries were armed on the 1st July, and a heavy fire from above two hundred pieces of cannon opened upon the body of the place, the garrison of which, after a blockade of two months, began to be severely straitened for provisions. On the 16th a great magazine of forage took fire, and was consumed; and the destruction of several mills augmented the difficulties of the besieged, who now found their great numbers the principal difficulty with which they had to contend. A capitulation, therefore, by which the garrison should be withdrawn to some quarter where their services might be of more value to the Republic, was agreed to, and the 22d July fixed on as the day for its accomplishment. While this was going on within the city, the army of Beaufarnais, urged by repeated orders from the Convention, was at length taking measures for its deliverance. Early in July, the Republicans broke up from the lines of Weissenberg, and after a variety of slow movements, a general attack took place on the 19th, on the whole allied position, over an extent of nearly thirty leagues. But the efforts of the French, feeble and ill-conducted, led to no result, and, in the midst of their complicated movements, Mayence surrendered on the 22d. The Duke of Brunswick, rejoiced at finding himself extricated by this event, from a situation which, with more daring adversaries, would have been full of peril, accorded favourable terms to the garrison; they were permitted to march out with their arms and baggage on condition of not serving against the Allies for a year; a stipulation of ruinous consequences to the Royalist party, as it disengaged seventeen thousand veteran soldiers, who were forthwith sent against the insurgents in La Vendée. The Republicans, finding the city taken, fell back in disorder, and regained the lines of Weissenberg in such confusion as indicated rather a total rout than an indecisive offensive movement.^{1*}

¹ Hard. ii.
296, 319.
Jom. iii.
236, 252.

While these events were taking place on the Rhine, the

* Already it had become evident that the Prussians were secretly inclined towards the French, and that, after the capture of Mayence, they would withdraw as soon as they could from the contest. During the siege, a negotiation for the exchange of prisoners was carried on between "the French Republic and the King of Prussia;" and such was the temper of the officers, that when the fortress was taken, they caused the Marseillaise hymn to be sung in the hotels where they lodged.—See HARDENBERG, ii. 363—319.

war was gradually assuming a more decisive character on the Flemish frontier. The congress which had been held at Antwerp for arranging the plan of the campaign, having at length resolved upon the operations which were to be pursued, and the British contingent having joined the line at the end of April, the Archduke Charles entered in triumph into Brussels, the people of which, with the usual inconstancy of the multitude, gave him as flattering a reception as had attended the entrance of the Republicans a few months before. The Allied generals, however, were far from improving the advantages afforded by the defection of Dumourier, and the extreme dejection of the French army; their forces were not put in motion till the beginning of May, before which the French had so far recovered from their consternation as to have actually resumed the offensive. Disposing of a splendid army of one hundred and twenty thousand men, Cobourg did nothing to disquiet the retreat of thirty thousand Republicans, disordered and dejected, to their own frontiers, and allowed them by his extreme tardiness to be reinforced by numerous levies from the interior before he attempted to follow up his successes. On the 1st May, a general attack was made by General Dampierre on the Allied position; but the Republicans were driven back to *their camp at Famars, with the loss of two thousand men and a large quantity of artillery.* On the 8th, a more serious action took place; the French attacked the Allies along their whole line, extending to nine leagues, with forces greatly inferior; but they were every where unsuccessful except at the wood of Vicogne, where the Prussians were forced back, until the arrival of the English Guards changed the face of affairs. These gallant corps drove back the French with the loss of four thousand men, and re-established the Allies in their position. In this action the brave General Dampierre was killed. This was the first time that the English and French soldiers were brought into collision in the war; little did either party contemplate the terrible contest which awaited them, before it was terminated, within a few miles of the same place, on the plain of Waterloo.¹

These repeated disasters convinced the Republicans of the necessity of remaining on the defensive, and striving

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XIII.

1783.

38.

French in
Flanders
forced back
to Famars.
April 25.

May 1.

May 8.

¹ Jom. III.
149, 160,
163. Ann.
Reg. 1793,
p. 169.
Toul. iv. 6.
Hard. H.
240, 251.

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

39.
Storming of
the camp at
Famars.

only to prevent the siege of those great towns which had been fortified for the protection of the frontier. But the Allies, having now accumulated eighty thousand men in front of Valenciennes, resolved to make a general attack on the intrenched camp which covered that important city. The assault was fixed for the 23d, and was conducted by two grand columns, seconded by several partial demonstrations. The first column consisted of sixteen thousand men, under the Duke of York; the second, of eleven thousand men, was placed under the orders of General Ferrari. A thick fog at first concealed the hostile armies from each other, but soon after daybreak it rose like a curtain, and discovered the Republican lines posted in front of their intrenchments, and defended by a numerous artillery. The English troops under Abercromby, forming part of Ferrari's corps, advanced along with the Germans under Walmoden, crossed the Roelle, and carried some of the redoubts of the camp, notwithstanding a vehement fire from the French artillery. The attack of the Duke of York having also been followed by the capture of three redoubts, and the whole Allied army encamped close to the intrenchments, the French resolved not to wait the issue of an assault on the following day, but evacuated their position during the night, and fell back to the famous camp of Cæsar, leaving Valenciennes to its fate. The Allies on this occasion lost a very favourable opportunity of bringing the war to a termination. Cobourg had eighty thousand men in the field; the French had not fifty thousand: had he acted with vigour, and followed up his advantage, he might have destroyed the Republican army, and marched at the head of an irresistible force to Paris. But at that period, neither the allied cabinets nor generals were capable of such a resolution. The former looked only to a war of conquest and acquisition against France, in which the great object was to secure their advantages: the latter to a slow methodical campaign, similar to that pursued in ordinary times against a regular government.¹

It was immediately determined by the Allies to form the sieges of Valenciennes and Condé. The army of observation, thirty thousand strong, encamped near Herinnes, fronting Bouchain, while a corps of equal strength under

¹ Hard. ii.
292-7.
Toul. iv. 10,
13. Jom.
iii. 165, 170.
Ann. Reg.
1793, 169.

the Duke of York was intrusted with the conduct of the siege. The garrison, consisting of nine thousand men, made a gallant defence; but the operations of the besiegers were conducted with the greatest activity, and ere long crowned with success. On the 14th June, the trenches were opened, and above two hundred and fifty pieces of heavy cannon, with ninety mortars, kept up a vigorous and incessant fire upon the works and the city. Upon the unfortunate inhabitants, the tempest fell with unmitigated severity, and several parts of the town were speedily in flames; but they bore their sufferings with great resignation, till the pangs of hunger began to be added to the terrors of the bombardment. Ultimately the approaches of the besiegers were chiefly carried on by their subterraneous operations. During the whole of July, the mines were pushed with the greatest activity, and on the 25th, three great globes of compression were ready to be fired under the covered way, while two columns, the first composed of English, the second of Germans, were prepared to take advantage of the confusion, and assault the ruins. At nine at night the globes were sprung with a prodigious explosion, and the assaulting columns immediately rushed forward with loud shouts, cleared the palisades of the covered way, pursued the Republicans into the interior works, where they spiked the cannon, and dislodged the garrison, but were unable to maintain their ground from the fire of the place. The outworks, however, being now in great part carried, and the consternation of the citizens having risen to the highest pitch, from the prospect of an approaching assault, the governor, on the 28th, was obliged to capitulate. The garrison, by this time reduced to seven thousand men, marched out with the honours of war, laid down its arms, and was permitted to retire to France, on condition of not again serving against the Allies. It was employed, like that of Mayence, in the war against the Royalists in La Vendée and Toulon, and there rendered essential service to the Republican arms.¹

In this siege, the operations on both sides were conducted with great vigour and ability; and the French artillery even surpassed its ancient renown. The Allies threw eighty-four thousand cannon-balls, twenty thousand shells, and forty-eight thousand bombs into the town. The

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1793.

40.
Valenciennes and Condé invested, and the former taken.
June 14.

28th July.

¹ Jomini, iv. 171, 174, 181. Toul. iv. 42, 43.

41.
Blockade and capitulation of Condé.

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XIII.

1793.

13th July.

¹ Toul. iv.
32. Jom.
iii. 181.

42.

And are
taken pos-
session of
in name of
the Empe-
ror of Aus-
tria.

² Hard. ii.
327, 328.

governor, General Ferrand, was arrested, and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and but for the intervention of a commissioner of the Convention, would have forfeited his life for a defence highly honourable in itself, and which in the end proved the salvation of France, by the time which it afforded for the completion of the armaments in the interior. The siege, or rather blockade of Condé, was less distinguished by remarkable events. After an obstinate resistance, it capitulated a short time before Valenciennes, the garrison having exhausted all their means of subsistence. By this event, 3000 men were made prisoners, and an important fortress gained to the Allied forces.¹

The capitulation of these two fortresses brought to light the fatal change in the object and policy of the war which had been agreed upon at the Congress of Antwerp. All Europe was in anxious suspense, awaiting the official announcement of the intentions of the Allies by the use which they made of their first considerable conquests, when the hoisting of the Austrian colours on their walls too plainly avowed that they were to be retained as permanent acquisitions by the Emperor. This was soon placed beyond a doubt by the proclamation issued by Prince Cobourg on 13th July 1793, on entering the town, in which he declared, "I announce by the present proclamation, that I take possession in name of His *Imperial and Royal Majesty*, and that I will accord to all the inhabitants of the *conquered* countries security and protection; hereby declaring that I will not exercise the power conferred upon me by the *Right of Conquest* but for the preservation of the public peace, and the protection of individuals." This was immediately followed by the establishment of an Imperial and Royal Junta at Condé, for the administration of the conquered provinces, in the name of the Emperor, which commenced its operations by dispossessing all the revolutionary authorities, restoring the religious bodies, checking the circulation of assignats, and removing the sequestration from the emigrant estates.²

The public revelation of this unhappy change in the objects of the coalition, was the first rude shock which its fortunes received. It sowed divisions among the Allies, as much as it united its enemies. Prussia now perceived

clearly that the war had become one of aggression on the part of Austria ; and, conceiving the utmost inquietude at such an augmentation of the power of her dreaded rival, secretly resolved to paralyse all the operations of her armies, now that Mayence, the bulwark of the north of Germany, was regained, and withdraw as soon as decency would permit from a contest in which success appeared more to be dreaded than defeat. The French emigrants were struck with consternation at so decisive a proof of the intended spoliation of their country ; Monsieur, afterwards Louis XVIII., solemnly protested, as guardian for his nephew, Louis XVII., against any dismemberment of his dominions ; placards appeared on all the walls of Brussels, calling on all Frenchmen to unite, to save their country from the fate of Poland, to which it was suspected, not without reason, Dumourier was no stranger ; while the Convention, turning to the best account this announcement of intended conquest, succeeded in inspiring a degree of unanimity in defence of their country, which they never could have effected had the Allies confined themselves to the original objects of the war.¹

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1793.

43.

Disastrous
effects of
this step.¹ Hard. II.
329, 331.

Custine, removed from the army of the Rhine, was placed in command of the army in Flanders in the end of May. On his arrival at the camp of Caesar, he found the soldiers in the most deplorable state, both of disorganisation and military spirit ; a large portion of the older troops had been withdrawn to sustain the war in La Vendée, and their places supplied by young conscripts, almost totally undisciplined, who were shaken by the first appearance of the enemy's squadrons. "He trembled," to use his own words, "at the thought of what might occur, if he followed the example of his predecessors, and made a forward movement before confidence and discipline were re-established among the soldiers." His first care was to issue a severe proclamation, calculated to restore discipline ; his next, to use the utmost efforts to revive the spirit of the troops ; but, as he was still inferior in number to his opponents, he did not venture, notwithstanding the reiterated orders of the Convention, to make any movement for the relief of the besieged places. Incessantly engaged in teaching the conscripts the rudiments of the military art, he chose to brave the resentment of government, rather than lead

44.

Custine
takes shelter
in intrench-
ed camps.

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1793.

- them to certain butchery, and probable defeat. His firmness in discharging this important, but perilous duty, proved fatal to himself, but the salvation of France: it habituated an undisciplined crowd to the use of arms, and preserved, in a period of extreme peril, the nucleus of an army, on which the preservation of the Republic depended. But the Convention, impatient for more splendid achievements, and willing to ascribe every disaster to the fault of the generals, deprived him of the command, and ordered him to Paris to answer for his conduct; where he was soon after delivered over to the Revolutionary Tribunal, condemned, and executed, along with Beauharnais, accused of misconduct, in the attempt to raise the siege of Mayence, whose name the extraordinary fortunes of his widow have rescued from oblivion. Cruel and unjust examples, which added to the numerous sins of the Republican government; but by placing its generals in the alternative of victory or death, contributed to augment the fearless energy which led to the subsequent triumphs of the French arms!¹

¹ Jom. iii.
182, 184, 185.
Hard. ii. 343.
Toul. iv. 44,
45.

45.
Rout in the
camp of
Cæsar, and
desperate
condition of
the French.

August 8.

Reinforced by the besieging armies, the forces under Prince Cobourg now amounted to above eighty thousand foot and twenty thousand horse, all ready for action, a force greatly superior to the dispirited and inexperienced troops to which it was opposed. Shut up within the camp of Cæsar, the French army was avowedly unable to keep the field in presence of the Allies. Even this last stronghold they were not long permitted to retain. In the beginning of August, they were attacked and driven from its trenches, with so much ease, that the rout could hardly be called a battle. The Republicans fled in confusion the moment the Allies appeared in sight. So precipitate was their flight, that, as at the battle of the Spurs, three centuries before, hardly a shot was fired or a stroke given, before the whole army was dissolved. After this disaster, the Republicans retreated behind the Scarpe, the last defensible ground in front of Arras; beyond which there remained neither position to take, nor fortified place to defend, on the road to Paris. The Allies in great force were grouped within one hundred and sixty miles of that capital: fifteen days' march would have brought them to its gates. Already Cambray was invested; Chateau Cambresis occupied; a camp formed between Peronne and St

Quentin, and the light troops pushed on to Peronne and Bapaume. Irresolution prevailed in the French army, dismay in the capital, every where the Republican authorities were taking to flight: the Austrian generals, encouraged by such extraordinary success, were at length urgent to advance and improve their successes, before the enemy recovered from their consternation; and if they had been permitted to do so, what incalculable disasters would Europe have been spared! We shall see hereafter the deplorable division of interests which prevented this early termination of the war; and how deeply Great Britain has cause to regret the narrow and selfish views which prompted the part she took in the transaction.¹

But how desperate soever the fortunes of the Republic now appeared, and in reality were had the Allies acted with vigour and unanimity, no weakness or faltering appeared in the conduct of the French government. When the invasion had, on every side, pierced the territory of France, and civil war tore its bosom, the government took the most energetic steps to meet the danger. The Convention had armed the Committee of Public Salvation with a power more terrible than ever had been wielded by an eastern conqueror; and the decrees of the Legislature corresponded to the energy of their measures. They felt, in the language of Danton, "That the head of Louis was the terrible gauntlet which they had thrown down to the monarchs of Europe: that life or death was in the struggle." The whole power of France was called forth; ten thousand committees, spread over every part of the country, carried into execution the despotic mandates of the Committee of Public Salvation, and its resistless powers wrung not less out of the sufferings than the patriotism of the country the means of successful resistance. No situation could be more perilous than that in which the Revolutionary government was now placed. No less than two hundred and eighty thousand men were in the field on the side of the Allies, from Basle to Dunkirk; the ancient barrier of France was broken by the capture of Valenciennes and Condé; Mayence gave the invaders a secure passage into the heart of the country; while Toulon and Lyons had raised the standard of revolt, and a devouring fire consumed the heart of the western provinces.² Sixty thousand insur-

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¹ Hard. ii.
348, 349.
Toul. iv.
45—49.
Ann. Reg.
1793, 191.

46.
Vigorous
measures of
the govern-
ment.

² Jom. iv.
21, 24, 25
Th. v. 170,
207. Mig.
i. 248.

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gents in La Vendée threatened Paris in the rear, while an hundred and eighty thousand Alliés in front seemed prepared to encamp under its walls. The forces of the Republic were not only inferior in number, but their spirit, discipline, and equipment were in the most wretched state.

47.
Their efforts
to rouse the
whole popu-
lation.

3d Aug.

But all these deficiencies in numbers and organisation were speedily supplied, by the extraordinary energy and ability which rose to the head of military affairs, after the insurrection of 31st May, and the establishment of the Committee of Public Salvation. Barère, on the part of that able body, declared in the Assembly, "Liberty has become the creditor of every citizen; some owe it their industry; others their fortune; some their counsels; others their arms; all their lives. Every native of France, of whatever age or sex, is called to the defence of his country. All moral and physical powers; all political and industrial resources, are at its command. Let every one then occupy his post in the grand national and military movement which is in preparation. The young men will march to the frontiers; the more advanced forge the arms, transport the baggage and artillery, or provide the subsistence requisite for their defence. The women will make the tents, the dresses of the soldiers, and carry their beneficent labours into the interior of the hospitals; even the hands of infancy may be usefully employed; and the aged, imitating the example of ancient virtue, will cause themselves to be transported into the public places, to animate the youth by their exhortations and their example. Let the national edifices be converted into barracks, the public squares into workshops, the cellars into manufactories of saltpetre; let the saddle-horses be furnished for the cavalry, the draught-horses for the artillery; the fowling-pieces, the swords, and pikes, will suffice for the service of the interior. The Republic is a besieged city; all its territory must become a vast camp."¹

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 467,
470. Th. v.
207. Mig.
ii. 286.

48.
Great levy of
1,200,000
men ordered
and exe-
cuted.
3d Aug.

These energetic measures were not only adopted by the Assembly, but immediately carried into execution. A new levy of twelve hundred thousand men was ordered by the Convention; and, what is still more extraordinary, the greater part of this immense body was soon under arms. France became an immense workshop, resounding with the note of military preparation; the roads were

covered with conscripts hastening to the different points of assembly; fourteen armies, and twelve hundred thousand soldiers, were soon assembled round the standards of the Republic. The whole property of the state, by means of confiscations, and the forced circulation of assignats, was put at the disposal of the government; the insurgent population every where threw the better classes into captivity, while bands of revolutionary ruffians, paid by the state, perambulated every village in its territory, and wrung from the terrified inhabitants unqualified submission to the despotic Republic. At the same time, the means of raising supplies were provided with equal energy. All the old claims on the state were converted into a great revolutionary debt, in which the new could not be distinguished from the ancient creditors. A forced tax of a milliard, or £40,000,000 sterling, was instantly ordered to be levied from the rich, which was realised in paper, secured at once on the national domains. As the prices of every article, even those of the first necessity, were altogether deranged by these measures, and the prospect of famine was every where immediate, the municipalities throughout France were invested with the power of seizing subsistence and merchandise of every kind in the hands of the owners, and compelling their sale for a fixed price in assignats; in other words, taking them for an elusory payment. The great object of all these measures was at once to repel the foreign invasion, and render the national domains an immediate source of income, at a time when purchasers could not be found; and it must be confessed, that never did a government adopt such vast and energetic measures to attain these objects. Fear became the great engine for filling the ranks: the bayonets of the Allies appeared less formidable than the guillotine of the Convention; and safety, despaired of every where else, was found alone in the armies on the frontier. The destruction of property, the ruin of industry, the agonies of millions, appeared as nothing to men who wielded the engines of the Revolution; fortune or wealth have no weight with those who are engaged in a struggle of life and death.¹

By a strange combination of circumstances, the ruin of commercial credit, the loss of the colonies, the stagnation of industry, the drying up of the sources of opulence,

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¹ Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 470,
479. Journ.
iv. 21, 22.
Hard. ii.
278, 279.
Th. v. 207,
208.

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49.
Effect of,
general
suffering in
filling the
army

augmented the present resources of the revolutionary government. Ruling an impoverished and bankrupt state, the Convention was for the time the richest power in Europe. Despotism, it is true, extinguishes the sources of future wealth; but it gives a command of present resources which no regular government can obtain. The immense debts of government were paid in paper money, issued at no expense, and bearing a forced circulation; the numerous confiscations gave a shadow of security to its engagements; the terrible right of requisition put every remnant of private wealth at its disposal; the conscription filled the army with all the youth of the state; error and famine impelled voluntary multitudes into its ranks. Before them was the garden of hope—behind them a howling wilderness.

At the head of the military department was placed Carnot,* a man whose extraordinary talents and resolute

* Lazare Nicolas Marguerite Carnot was born at Nolai in Burgundy, on 13th May 1753, of a respectable and highly esteemed burgher family. His father was an advocate, and as he had eighteen children, and no fortune, he esteemed himself fortunate in getting an entrance for Lazare to the college of Autun, with a view to his entering the ecclesiastical profession. No sooner, however, had young Carnot commenced his studies, than he showed so decided a predilection for mathematical and mechanical pursuits, that his father, wisely yielding to an impulse which he could not control, removed him from his ecclesiastical labours, and sent him to one of the military schools of the capital. There, at the expiration of two years, he went through a brilliant examination, and was admitted to the corps of engineers, the only branch of the service which was then open to young men who had not the advantage of aristocratic birth. From thence he was removed to the military school of Mézières, where he studied for two years under the celebrated Professor Monge. His first employment in active life was in the year 1772, when he was engaged in aiding in the superintendence of considerable additions to the fortifications of Calais. After this occupation ceased, as the continuance of peace left him much leisure time upon his hands, he applied himself to the study of literature and poetry, and the "Almanach des Muses," for some years after, contains several poetical pieces of his composition. In 1784, he was the successful competitor for a prize offered by the Academy of Dijon, for an Eloge on Vauban; and on this occasion he was publicly crowned by the Prince of Condé, who happened to be there at the time, and who took him in so effectual a manner under his protection, that at the age of thirty-two he was captain of engineers and chevalier of the order of St Louis. Though highly estimating the genius of Vauban, however, Carnot was not a mere follower of his principles, and constantly maintained in private, as he did at a subsequent period in his writings on the subject, that the well-known assertion of that great man, that the means of defence in sieges were inferior to those of attack, and that the hour of the fall of every fortress might be calculated with mathematical certainty, was erroneous. Invincible tenacity of his opinions, and great vigour in their conception, were, in every period of life, his leading characteristics.

During the peace which followed the conclusion of the American War, he followed out with ardour his mechanical researches, and in 1786 published an essay on machines, which so much added to his reputation, that he was offered by Prince Henry of Prussia, who had witnessed his crowning

character contributed more than any other circumstance to the early success of the revolutionary wars. Austere in character, unbending in disposition, republican in principle, he more nearly resembled the stern patriots of antiquity than any other statesman in modern times. It was his misfortune to be associated with Robespierre in the Committee of Public Salvation, during the whole of the Reign of Terror, and his name, in consequence, stands affixed to many of the worst acts of that sanguinary tyrant; but he has solemnly asserted, and his character

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50.

Carnot, war
minister.
His charac-
ter.

at Dijon, advancement in the Prussian service, which he had patriotic spirit enough to decline. He had too much penetration not to see that the time was rapidly approaching when the barriers of rank would be thrown down in his own country, and the career of talent be open to all. Soon after, he married the daughter of a rich merchant at St Omer, and this procured for him an entrance into the Legislative Assembly, as deputy for the department of the Pas de Calais, in 1791.

An ardent admirer of the institutions of antiquity, enamoured of the heroes of Plutarch, living much with the mighty dead, hardly at all with the living little—he dreamt of the Sabine farm and the virtues of Fabricius amidst the corruption of Paris, and soon gave decisive proof that he was resolved to follow out his principles in the government and regeneration of France. His first step in the Assembly was a motion for a decree against Calonne, the Viscount Mirabeau, and the German princes, who were preparing, under the prince of Condé, to make war upon France—a circumstance which not unnaturally led to the remark, that the first use he had made of power was to assail the benefactor whose crowning of him at Dijon had first opened to him the path of distinction. His subsequent career demonstrated at once the violence, austerity, and rigidity of his principles. He was soon made a member of the military committee in the Assembly; the chief object of which was to censure and depreciate the war measures of government—a duty which he executed with equal zeal and ability. Soon after, he brought forward a motion for destroying all citadels of fortified towns, upon the ground that it gave government the means of bombarding the streets, and overawing the inhabitants. He declaimed afterwards, with force and eloquence, against the murderers of General Dillon, who had fallen the victim of a military mutiny; but he warmly supported the disbanding of the constitutional guard of Louis XVI., which necessarily led to the surrender of that monarch to civil assassins. Subsequently he strongly enforced, on the 10th August, the decree for the dethronement of Louis, and took such a lead on that occasion that he was appointed a member of the committee which, on the overthrow of the crown, assumed the supreme direction of affairs.

The duty assigned to Carnot on that occasion was to organise and reduce to obedience the army of the Rhine; and by the vigour and severity of his proceedings, he brought that important body to range itself under the banners of the revolutionary government at Paris. Next he set off to the Pyrenees, and accomplished the same result with the troops there, as well as put them in a situation to open the campaign against the Spanish forces. In the Convention, he was again elected deputy for the Pas de Calais. In the trial of Louis he voted for his death, observing—“In my opinion, justice and policy demand his death, but never did duty so weigh upon my heart.” Subsequently he prepared several reports, which were eagerly adopted by the legislature, on the necessity of incorporating Flanders and other conquests with the Republic, and was one of the first who, disregarding the declarations against foreign conquest so often made by the Constituent Assembly, openly declared that nature had assigned the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, as the natural limits of the French territory, and that no peace should be concluded which did not secure them to the Great Nation. His appointment as a member of the Committee of Public Salvation in August 1793, gave him

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entitles the allegation to attention, that in the pressure of business he signed these documents without knowing what they contained, or at all events on the responsibility of his colleagues, to whom the interior department more immediately belonged; that such was the pressure on him that he would have signed a warrant for his own execution; and that he saved more lives by his entreaties, than his colleagues destroyed by their severity. Still, giving full weight to this defence, and admitting that a patriot contending for the independence of his country against foreign enemies, and a minister jointly entrusted

too fair an opportunity of putting his principles in practice; and thenceforward his biography forms part of the history of France. Carnot published several able works on scientific subjects; but his literary reputation rests chiefly on his celebrated theory for the defence of strong places, in which, in opposition to Vauban, he strenuously maintains, that the means of defence in fortified towns may be made equal or superior to those of attack, so that they could never be taken. His plan for attaining this object rests on three bases:—1st, That the duty of defending the stronghold to the *last extremity* should, by military law, be held to attach to the governor and whole garrison; 2d, That the scarps and counterscarps should not, as heretofore, be perpendicular, or nearly so, and built of masonry, but of turf inclined at an angle of 45 degrees; and that the wall on which reliance was to be placed should be built at the bottom of the ditch, and in its middle, which was to be dry, and loopholed for musketry. 3d, That a large number of howitzers and thirteen-inch mortars, charged with four-ounce balls, should be constantly in readiness to open a concentric fire upon any enemy who should attempt to run the sap up to the top of the counterscarp; and he demonstrated, by the calculation of chances, that such a number of these would take effect as to prove fatal to any attacking force, and the larger the more certainly. There was, unquestionably, great originality and merit in these conceptions; but Sir Howard Douglas, to whose genius and science British gunnery owes so much, has demonstrated, both on the theoretical principles and from actual experiments—1st, That ricochet shot levelled over the summit of the counterscarp will, by the rebound, in three or four hours beat down the strongest wall of that description which can be constructed in the bottom of the ditch. 2d, That the wall, when so battered, will first nod, and at last fall *outwards*, so as to uncover the defending force, and afford rough solid footing for the assailants to rush over. 3d, That though the balls thrown into the air, at an angle of 45 degrees, will ascend with great velocity, yet from the effect of the *resistance of the air*, they will descend with little more momentum than that resulting from their own weight, and could not be relied on as adequate to destroy or retard an enterprising enemy. Still there can be no doubt that Carnot's was a much greater step in the science of defence than had been made since the days of Vauban, and possibly may one day make the means of resistance equal to those of attack. In particular, it deserves consideration, whether by making the balls heavier, as six or eight ounces, they might not be rendered as destructive to the besiegers as Carnot supposes. It is said that in an experiment lately made in India with balls of eight ounces, it was fully demonstrated that this is the case. It is not a little remarkable that Carnot's scientific calculations, perfectly accurate if there was no atmosphere, proved erroneous from not taking into account the *resistance of the air*; just as his political speculations proved so destructive from not taking into account the resistance or impulse of human wickedness.—See *Mémoires sur Carnot*, i. 124; *Biographie Universelle*, Supplement, ix. 181, 183; CARNOT, *Sur la Défense des Places Fortifiées*, Paris, 1812; and Sir HOWARD DOUGLAS'S *Reply*, London, 1815; and JONES'S *Sieges*, ii. 164, 167.

with others with the duties of government, is often obliged to concur in many measures of which he individually disapproves—still, when we advert to the dreadful career of the Committee of Public Salvation, of which he was an active member, it is impossible to consider this apology as altogether satisfactory; and most certainly Carnot's memory will never be rescued from the bloody stain which remains affixed to all the members of that relentless government.¹ *

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¹ Carnot's
Memoirs,
230.

He was the creator of the new military art in France, which Dumouriez was only permitted to sketch, and Napoleon brought to perfection. Simple in his manners, unostentatious in his habits, incorruptible in his inclinations, he was alike superior to the love of wealth, the weakness of inferior, and the voice of ambition, the infirmity of noble minds. When called to the post of danger by the voice of his country, he never declined the peril: disdaining to court Napoleon in the plenitude of his power, and alone voting against his assumption of the Imperial crown, he fled to his assistance in the hour of distress, and tendered the aid to a falling, which he had refused to a conquering monarch. Intrusted with the dictatorship of the armies, he justified his country's choice by victory; superior even to the triumphs he had won, he resigned with pleasure the possession of power, to exercise his understanding in the abstract sciences, or renovate his heart by the impressions of country life. Almost alone of the illustrious men of his age, his character—if his fatal connexion with the Committee of Public Salvation could be forgotten—has emerged comparatively untainted from the Revolutionary ordeal; and history has to record, with the pride due to real greatness, that after having wielded irresistible force, and withstood unfettered power, he died poor and unbefriended in a foreign land.²

51.
His charac-
ter as a
statesman.

² Thib. i. 37.
Carnot, 235.
Dum. iv. 5,
6.

"Carnot," said Napoleon, "has organised victory." It was the maxim of this great man, "That nothing was so easy as to find excellent officers in all ranks, if they were only chosen according to their capacity and their courage. For this reason, he took the utmost pains to make himself acquainted with their names and character; and such was the extent of his information, that it was rare for a soldier of merit to escape him, even though only

52.
Carnot's
principles
for conduct-
ing the war.

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¹ Carnot,
31, 32.

a simple private. He deemed it impossible that an army, commanded by officers chosen exclusively from a limited class of society, could long maintain a contest with one led by those chosen with discernment from the inferior ranks. Such commanders as Turenne and Condé seemed too rare to be calculated upon with any degree of certainty from a privileged class; while the mine of talent which lay hid in the lower stages of society, presented inexhaustible resources."¹ This principle being founded on the eternal laws of nature, is of universal application. It gives rise to the great superiority of republican over monarchical forces; and when once armies have been organised, and thoroughly disciplined on this footing, they never can be successfully resisted but by troops in whom the same military virtues have been developed, and popular passions equally general called forth. Supposing the abilities of the higher orders to be equal to those of an equal number in the inferior, it is impossible, that they can ever produce as great a mass of talent as will emerge on a free competition from the numerous ranks of their humble competitors. A hundred thousand men can never produce as many energetic characters as ten millions.

53.
Aided by
the effects of
the Revolution.

But this system, powerful as it is in developing talent, would have failed in enabling France to combat the forces of the coalition, had it not been for the extraordinary combination of causes which at this period brought the whole forces, physical and intellectual, of France, into the ranks of the army. The Revolution had at once closed all other careers, and opened unbounded prospects to talent in that path, to all ranks indiscriminately; and as it afforded the means of elevation in a peculiar manner to the most energetic and audacious characters, that dreadful convulsion was eminently favourable to the growth of military prowess. The distress consequent on the ruin of so many branches of industry, the agitation arising from the dissolution of all the bonds of society, the restless habits acquired by successful revolt, all conspired to spread a taste for military exploit, and fill the ranks of the army with needy but ardent adventurers. Such dispositions are always prevalent during civil dissensions, because it is the nature of such conflicts to awaken the passions, and disqualify for the habits of ordinary life. But they were

in an especial manner excited by the campaign of 1793, first by the call which resounded through France to defend the state, and next by the thirst for military glory which sprang up by the defeat of the invasion.

It was in the extraordinary energy and ability of the Committee of Public Salvation,* joined to the ferment excited by the total subversion of society, the despotic power wielded by the Convention, and the extraordinary want of capacity in the allied cabinets and generals, that the real secret is to be found of the successful resistance by France to the formidable invasion of 1793. The inability of Napoleon to resist a similar attack in 1815, demonstrates this important truth, and should be a warning to future ages not to incur the same risk, in the hope of obtaining a similar triumph. Superior in military talent, heading a band of veterans, supported by a terrible name, he sought in vain to communicate to the empire the energy which, under the iron grasp of the Convention, had been brought into action in the Republic. A rational being will never succeed in equalling the strength which, in a transport of frenzy, a madman can for a brief period exert.¹

While such extraordinary and unheard-of efforts were making in France to resist the invasion with which they were menaced, a change, fraught in its ultimate results with important consequences, took place in the Imperial government. Kaunitz, so long at the head of the Austrian cabinet, had survived the age to which he belonged; his cautious habits, long experience, and great abilities, were inadequate to supply the want of that practical acquaintance with affairs which arises from having grown up under their influence. The French Revolution had opened up a new era in human affairs: the old actors, how distinguished soever, were unacquainted with the novel machinery, and unfit to play their parts in the mighty drama which was approaching. The veteran Austrian diplomatist retired from the helm, full of years and loaded with honours, from a prudent disinclination to risk his great reputation in the stormy scenes which had already arisen, and the still more difficult ones which his sagacity foresaw.² He was succeeded in the direction of foreign

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Feb. 6.

54.
And the
ability of
the Com-
mittee of
Public Sal-
vation.

¹ Jom. iii.
6. Hard.
ii. 278.

55.
Retirement
of Kaunitz
at Vienna,
and access-
ion of Thu-
gut to the
direction of
Foreign
affairs.

² Hard. ii.
259, 260.

March 28.

* Their names were at first Barère, Delmas, Bréard, Cambon, Lebray, Danton, Guyton Morveau, Treillard, and Lacroix.—See HARD. ii. 774.

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affairs by THUGUT,* who long kept possession of the situation of prime minister during the Revolutionary war. The son of a poor boatman at Lintz, he had, by the industry of his parents, been early placed at the school of oriental languages at Vienna, where his diligence and abilities attracted the notice of the Empress Maria Theresa. She recommended him to the director of the college, and at the age of fifteen he was attached, by her desire, as interpreter to the Austrian embassy at Constantinople, from whence he gradually rose in the diplomatic line to the portfolio of foreign affairs.

56.
His character and first measures.

Though he had long resided at Paris, and was intimately connected with Mirabeau, whose conversion to the interests of the court was partly owing to his exertions, he maintained throughout his career an inflexible hostility to Republican principles. His combinations were not always crowned with success, often they terminated in disaster: Yet his bitterest enemies cannot deny him the credit of a truly patriotic spirit, an energetic character, profound skill in diplomacy, and a fidelity to his engagements, as unusual as it was honourable in those days of weakness and tergiversation. His accession to office was soon followed by an evident increase of vigour in diplomatic measures. Pressing notes to the inferior German powers brought about the equipment of that tardy and inefficient force, the Germanic contingents; while a menacing proclamation from the Diet of Ratisbon prohibited all circulation of French assignats or

22d March.

* Thugut's history was very remarkable, and affords a striking instance of the manner in which, in seeking for the diplomatic or military ability of which they stand in need to sustain the fortunes of the state, even the most aristocratic governments on the Continent descend to the very humblest ranks of society. He was born at Lintz in 1739, and was the son of a poor boatman at that place, who, by great exertions, had succeeded in getting him placed at the Oriental School of Vienna, where the ability with which he underwent an examination in the Eastern languages attracted the notice of Maria Theresa, who was present on the occasion, and who directed that, on leaving the academy, he should be attached to the Austrian embassy at Constantinople. In 1754 he commenced his career at the Turkish capital in that capacity at the early age of fifteen; and such was the extraordinary progress he made in Eastern languages, that in three years he was appointed interpreter to the embassy. He continued in that important situation till 1770, and in 1772 was sent as envoy to the Congress of Torkchany, where he executed the delicate duties entrusted to him with such ability, that in 1774 he was made by Maria Theresa a baron, with the dignity of Commander of the Order of St Stephen. In 1774 he performed, by order of the Empress, several journeys in the suite of her daughters, the future Queens of France and Naples. In 1778, when the death of the Elector of Bavaria had rekindled the flames of war between Prussia and Austria, he was sent on a secret mission to

revolutionary writings, and ordered the immediate departure from their territory of all subjects of that country who could not give a sufficient reason for their residence. But though these measures might be well calculated to prevent the inundation of the empire with democratic principles, it was with very different weapons that the formidable army which had grown up out of the agonies of the Republic required to be combated.¹

At the time, however, that the zeal of Austria was thus warming in the common cause, that of Prussia was rapidly cooling; and to the lukewarmness and indifference of that power in the contest with France, more than to any other cause, the extraordinary success which for some years attended the Republican arms is to be ascribed. The selfish ambition of the cabinets of Vienna, St Petersburg, and Berlin, was the cause of this unhappy disunion. Hardly was the ink of the treaty of the 14th July with Great Britain dry, when the hoisting of the Austrian flag on the walls of Valenciennes and Condé opened the eyes of the Prussian ministry to the projects of aggrandisement which were entertained by the Imperial cabinet, and which Thugut supported with his whole talents and influence. Irritated and chagrined at this prospect of material accession of power to their dreaded rival, the cabinet of Berlin derived some consolation from the completion of their arrangements with the Empress Catharine for the partition of Poland, in virtue of which the Prussian force had

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¹ Biog. Univ.
lxv. 573.
Hæd. vii. 259.
260, 274.

57.
Incipient
divisions of
Prussia and
Austria.

endeavour to accommodate matters with the Great Frederick—who at once divined his astute character. Subsequently he was sent in 1780, as minister of Austria, to the court of Warsaw; and in 1788, when Moldavia and Wallachia were conquered by the united arms of Russia and Austria, he was entrusted jointly by the two powers with the government of those provinces; which important situation he held till the peace of Teschen in 1790. After this he went to Paris, ostensibly to enjoy his fortune, but really as joint ambassador in secret with Count de Mery, who held that situation, and who was desirous of his aid to observe the progress, and mitigate the disasters, of the Revolution. He there had several interviews with Mirabeau, and powerfully contributed to fix that redoubtable orator in the interests of the court, and the prosecution of those designs in which he was unhappily interrupted by his death. In 1792, the advanced age and increasing infirmities of Kaunitz caused him to be recalled to Vienna, where he soon came to acquire a preponderating influence; and though the former still held the situation of chancellor of state, or prime minister, yet Thugut really had the entire direction of affairs: and on his death, in June 1794, he was appointed in his stead, and entirely directed the imperial diplomacy till June 1801, when Napoleon, after the battle of Marengo, made his retirement a *sine qua non* of any accommodation—deeming any peace insecure as long as so decided an opponent of the Revolution directed the Austrian councils.—See *Biographie Universelle*, xlv. 573, 576, (Tugut.)

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recently taken possession of Dantzic, with its noble harbour and fortifications, besides Thorn, and a large circumjacent territory, to the no small annoyance of Austria, which saw itself excluded from all share in the projected spoliation. Nor was Russia likely to be a more disinterested combatant in the common cause: for she, too, was intent on the work of partition, and had already inundated the duchy of Warsaw with troops, with the fixed design of rendering it the frontier of the Muscovite dominions. Thus, at the moment when the evident approach of peril to the national independence was closing those frightful divisions which had hitherto paralysed the strength of France, the allied powers, intent on separate projects of aggrandisement, were rapidly relaxing the bonds of the confederacy; and engaging in the most iniquitous partition recorded in modern times, at the very time when that vast power was arising, which was so soon destined to make them all tremble for their own possessions.¹

¹ Harl. ii.
332, 333.

58.
Recognition
of the mari-
time law by
the Allies.

This stage of the contest was marked by an important step in the maritime relations of Europe, which afterwards became of the utmost moment in the important discussions on neutral rights which took place at the close of the century. The Empress Catharine publicly announced the departure of Russia from the principles of the armed neutrality, and her resolution to act on those usages which England had uniformly maintained as being in conformity with the practice of all belligerent states, forming the common naval code of Europe. She equipped a fleet of twenty-five ships of the line, which was destined to cruise in the Baltic and North Seas, and whose instructions were "to seize all vessels, without distinction, navigating under the flag of the French Republic, or that of any other state which they might assume; and also to arrest every neutral vessel destined and loaded for a French harbour—oblige them to retrace their steps, or make for the nearest neutral harbour which might suit their convenience." These instructions were publicly announced to the Prussian, Swedish, and Danish courts; * and although the cabinet

* M. Bernstorff declared to the Danish cabinet, after announcing these instructions: Her Imperial Majesty, in issuing such orders, cannot be supposed to have in the slightest degree deviated from the beneficent system which is calculated to secure the interest of neutrals in war, seeing that it is noways applicable to the present circumstances. The French

of Copenhagen, which early perceived the advantages of the lucrative neutral commerce which the general hostility was likely to throw into the hands of its subjects, at first made some difficulties, yet it at length yielded, and all the maritime powers agreed to revert to the usages of war in regard to neutrals, which had existed prior to the Arméd Neutrality in 1780.¹

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¹ Hard. ii.
334, 341.

By a declaration issued on June 8, the British government enjoined its naval commanders to search all neutral vessels bound for France for articles contraband of war; and Sweden, Denmark, and Prussia, successively adopted the same principles. The latter power, in particular, declared, in a note to Count Bernstorff, intended to obviate the objections of the cabinet of Denmark, "His Majesty the King of Prussia, who has no interest but what is common with the King of Great Britain, can make no objection to the principles which circumstances have caused the court of London to adopt relative to the commerce of neutrals during the present war with France. The undersigned, in acceding absolutely and without limitation to all the demands of the British ambassador, obeys the express injunctions of his court in the most solemn manner, in order to prove to the world the perfect concert which in that, as in all other respects, prevails between the King of Prussia and the King of Great Britain." Thus, how loudly soever the maritime powers may have demanded a new maritime code as a restraint on the hostility of others when they are neutral, they were willing enough to revert to the old usages when they in their turn became the belligerent parties.²

59.

Adoption
of the same
principles
by England,
Prussia, and
Denmark.

² Hard. ii.
334, 341.

Revolutionists, after having overturned every thing in their own country, and bathed their impious hands in the blood of their sovereign, have, by a public decree, declared themselves the allies of every people who shall commit similar atrocities, and have followed this up by attacking with an armed force all their neighbours. Neutrality cannot exist with such a power, except in so far as it may be assumed from prudential considerations. Should there be any states whose situation does not permit them to make such efficacious efforts as the greater powers in the common cause, the least that can be required of them is, that they shall make use of such means as are evidently at their disposal, by abstaining from all intercourse with these disturbers of the public peace. • Her Imperial Majesty feels herself the more entitled to exact these sacrifices, as she has cheerfully submitted to them herself; being well aware of the disastrous effects which would ensue to the common interest, if, by reason of a free transport of provisions and naval stores, the enemy were put in possession of the means of prolonging and nourishing the contest.—See *Ann. Reg.* xxxiii.; *State Papers*, No. 41; and *HARD.* ii. 337, 341.

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60.

Absurd
policy of
the Allies,
and ruinous
division of
the army
insisted on
by the Bri-
tish.

1 Jom. iv.
35. Hard.
ii. 401. Th.
v. 218, 219.
11th Aug.

If the conduct of the Allies had been purposely intended to develope the formidable military strength which had grown up in the French Republic, they could not have adopted measures better calculated to effect their object than were actually pursued. Four months of success, which might have been rendered decisive, had been wasted in blameable inactivity. After having broken the frontier line of fortresses, and defeated the covering army of France in a pitched battle, when within fifteen marches of Paris, and at the head of a splendid army of a hundred and thirty thousand effective men, after fully providing for their communications, they thought fit to separate their forces, and instead of pushing on to the centre of the Republican power, pursue independent plans of aggrandisement. The English, with their allies, amounting to above thirty-five thousand men, moved towards Dunkirk, so long the object of their maritime jealousy, while forty-five thousand of the Imperialists sat down before Quesnoy, and the remainder of their vast army was broken into detachments to preserve the communications.¹

61.
The Eng-
lish besiege
Dunkirk,
the Aus-
trians Ques-
noy.

From this ruinous division may be dated all the subsequent disasters of the campaign. Had they held together, and pushed on vigorously against the masses of the enemy's forces, now severely weakened and depressed by defeat, there cannot be a doubt that the object of the war would have been gained. The decrees for levying the population *en masse* were not passed by the Convention for some weeks afterwards, and the forces they produced were not organised for three months. The mighty genius of Carnot had not as yet assumed the helm of affairs; the Committee of Public Salvation had not hitherto acquired its terrible energy; every thing promised great results to vigorous and simultaneous operations. It was a resolution of the English cabinet, in opposition to the declared and earnest wish of Cobourg and all the Allied generals, which occasioned this fatal division. The impartial historian must confess with a sigh, that it was British interests which here interfered with the great objects of the war, and that, by compelling the English contingent to separate for the siege of Dunkirk, England largely contributed to postpone, for twenty years, its glorious termination. Posterity has had ample room to lament the error²—a war of twenty years deeply check-

¹ Toul. iv.
49. Ann.
Reg. 1793,
377. Jom.
iv. 26, 37.
Hard. ii. 346,
347, 350.

ered with disaster ; the addition of six hundred millions to the public debt ; the sacrifice of millions of brave men—may be in a great degree traced to this unhappy resolution, for the adoption of which, on selfish grounds, England is still suffering a just punishment.

The Austrians were successful in their enterprise. After fifteen days of open trenches, Quesnoy capitulated, and the garrison, consisting of four thousand men, were made prisoners of war. The efforts of the Republicans to raise the siege terminated in nothing but disaster. Two columns of ten thousand men each, destined to disquiet the besiegers, were routed, and in one of them, a square of three thousand men was broken, and totally destroyed by the Imperial cavalry. But a very different fate awaited the British besieging army. The corps under the command of the Duke of York, consisting of twenty thousand British and Hanoverians, was raised, by the junction of a body of Austrians under Alvinzi, to thirty-seven thousand men. This force was inadequate to the enterprise, exposed as it was to attack from the main body of the French army. On the 18th August, the Duke of York arrived in the neighbourhood of Lincelles, where, after an obstinate engagement, a strong redoubt was carried by the English guards, and twelve pieces of cannon were taken. At the same time, the Dutch troops advanced under Marshal Freytag, and, driving the enemy from his position near Dunkirk, the Allies advanced to within a league of the place, and encamped at Furnes, extending from that place to the sand-hills on the sea shore. The fortress was immediately summoned, but the governor returned a determined refusal.¹

Sensible of the importance of this stronghold, which, if gained by the English, would have given them an easy inlet into the heart of France, the Republicans made the most vigorous efforts to raise the siege. "It is not," said Carnot, in a despatch to Houchard, "merely in a military point of view that Dunkirk is so important : it is far more so, because the national honour is involved in its relief. Pitt cannot prevent the revolution which is approaching in England, but by gaining that town to indemnify his country for the expenses of the war. Accumulate, therefore, immense forces in Flanders, and drive the enemy from its plains ; the decisive point of the contest lies there."

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62.
Quesnoy falls, but the siege of Dunkirk is protracted. Nov. 11.

¹ Ann. Reg. 1793, 379, 380. Jom. iv. 41, 45.

63.
Vigorous efforts of the French for the relief of the fortress, and slow progress of the English.

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This was the more necessary, because the works of the place were in the most deplorable state when the Allies appeared before it; and the garrison, consisting only of three thousand men, was totally insufficient to defend the town. If the bombarding flotilla had arrived from England at the same time with the besieging army, there can be no doubt that it would immediately have fallen. Immense preparations were making at Woolwich for the siege, and eleven new battalions had been embarked in the Thames for the besieging army. But such was the tardiness of their movements, that not a vessel appeared in sight at the harbour of Dunkirk, and the mistress of the seas had the mortification to find her land forces severely harassed by discharges from the contemptible gun-boats of the enemy. The delays of the English in these operations proved what novices they were in the art of war, and how little they were aware of the importance of time in military movements. Above three weeks were employed in preparations by the besieging force, a delay which enabled the French to bring up from the distant frontier of the Moselle the forces who ultimately raised the siege, and decided the fate of the campaign.¹

1 Th. v. 220.
Jom. iv. 46.
Ann. Reg.
1793, 380.
Hard. ii. 366.

64.
They accumulate
forces there
from the
Rhine to the
Moselle.

The French rulers did not discover the same inactivity. Following the wise course of accumulating overwhelming forces upon the decisive point, they brought thirty-five thousand men; by forced marches, and in great part by post, from the armies of the Rhine and Moselle, and placed the army destined to raise the siege, consisting by this addition of nearly fifty thousand men, under the command of General Houchard. The investment not having been completed, he succeeded in throwing ten thousand additional troops, on whose fidelity reliance could be placed, into the garrison. At the same time, the covering army, consisting of twenty thousand Dutch and Austrians, under the command of Marshal Freytag, was threatened by an attacking force of nearly double its amount. While the Republicans were thus adopting the system of concentrating their forces, the Allies, by the expansion of theirs, gave it every possible chance of success. A hundred thousand men, dispersed round Quesnoy, and extending from the sea to the Moselle, guarded all the entrances into the Netherlands, and covered a line two hundred miles in length.² Thus a hundred and

2 Ann. Reg.
1793, 380.
Th. v. 220.
Jom. iv. 51.

twenty thousand men were charged at once with the covering of two sieges, the maintenance of this immense line, and the protection of all Flankiers, from an enterprising enemy, possessing an interior line of communication, and already acting upon the principle of sacrificing all lesser objects to the weight to be given to the decisive blow.

The situation of the allied covering army was such as to give a vigorous attack, by an imposing mass of assailants, every chance of success. Freytag's corps of observation was, in the end, not posted at Furnes, so as to protect the rear of the besiegers, but a considerable way in front of it, in order to prevent any communication between the besieged and the interior of France; while the Dutch, under the Prince of Orange, were at the distance of three days' march at Menin, and incapable of rendering any assistance; and the Duke of York's besieging force lay exposed to an attack between these dispersed bodies. The Committee of Public Salvation had enjoined Houchard to throw himself, with forty thousand men, between the three corps, thus detached as if to invite his separate attacks, and fall successively on Freytag, the Prince of Orange, and the Duke of York. Napoleon would unquestionably have done so if he had been at the head of the army of Italy, and signalised Dunkirk, in all probability, by as decisive success as Rivoli or Arcola. But that audacious mode of proceeding could not be expected from a second in command; the principles on which it was founded were not yet understood, nor were his troops adequate to so bold an enterprise. He contented himself, therefore, with marching against the front of Freytag, with a view to throw him back on the besieging force, and raise the siege, instead of interposing between them and destroying both. The object to be thus attained was important, and its achievement proved the salvation of France. But it fell very far short of the great success expected by the French government; and the failure of the Republican general to enter into the spirit of their orders, at length brought him to the scaffold.¹

The attack was commenced on Marshal Freytag in the beginning of September. A series of engagements took place, from the 5th to the 7th September, between the French and the covering army, which terminated unfavourably.

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65.
Designs of
Carnot, and
operations
of Houch-
ard.

1 Th. v.
239, 240.
Hard. ii.
370, 371.

Sept. 5 to 7.

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1793.

66.

The siege is raised, and ruinous consequence of this defeat on the whole campaign.

8th Sept.

1 Toul. iv. 53, 54.
Jom. iv. 54, 61. Ann. Reg. 1793, p. 381. Th. v. 242, 244.

67.

Republicans do not follow up their success with vigour.

Sept. 12.

vourably to the Allies; and at length, on the morning of the 8th, a decisive attack was made by General Houchard on the main body of the Austrians, consisting of nearly eighteen thousand men, near Hondscote, in which the latter were defeated with the loss of fifteen hundred men. Meanwhile, the garrison of Dunkirk, acting in concert with the external army, made a vigorous sally on the besiegers, with forces superior to their own, and exposed them to the most imminent peril. The Duke of York, finding his flank harassed by the attacks of Houchard, in consequence of the defeat of the covering force, justly deemed his situation too precarious to risk a further stay in the lines, and on the night of the 8th, withdrew his besieging force, leaving fifty-two pieces of heavy artillery, and a large quantity of ammunition and baggage, to the conquerors. The consequences of this defeat proved ruinous to the whole campaign. It excited the most extravagant joy at Paris, and elevated the public spirit to a degree great in proportion to their former depression. The dislodging of a few thousand men at the extremity of the line, changed the face of the war from the German Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea. The Convention, relieved from the dread of immediate danger, and the peril of invasion, got time to mature its plans of foreign conquest, and organise the immense military preparations in the interior; while Fortune, weary of a party which threw away the opportunities of receiving her favours, passed over to the other side.¹

Houchard, however, did not improve his advantages as might have been expected. Instead of following up the plan of concentrating his forces upon a few points, he renewed the system of division, which had been so imprudently adopted by his adversaries. The forces of the Duke of York, in the camp to which he retired, being deemed too powerful for an immediate attack, he resolved to assail a corps of Dutch who were posted at Menin. A series of actions, with various success, in consequence ensued between the detached corps of the Allies, which kept up the communication between the Duke of York's army and the main body of the Imperialists under Prince Cobourg. On the one hand, the Dutch, overwhelmed by superior masses of the enemy, were defeated with the loss

of two thousand men, and forty pieces of cannon; while, on the other, General Beaulieu totally routed the army of Houchard at Courtray, and drove him behind the Lys. Nor did the disaster rest there. The panic communicated itself to all the camps, all the divisions; and the army which had lately raised the siege of Dunkirk, sought shelter in a promiscuous crowd under the cannon of Lisle—a striking proof of the unfitness of the Republican levies as yet for field movements, and of the ease with which, by energetic operations in large masses at that period, the greatest successes might have been obtained by the numerous and disciplined armies of the Allies, if acting together or in concert, and led by an able commander.¹

This last disaster proved fatal to General Houchard, already charged with culpable inactivity, in not following up the advantages at Hondscote by an immediate attack upon the British force. Accused by his own officers, he was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal at Paris, condemned and executed. The English had sacrificed Admiral Byng for having suffered a defeat; the Romans had condemned Manlius for having fought in disobedience to the orders of the Senate; but this was the first instance in history of a victorious general having been put to death for gaining a success which proved the salvation of his country. The proceedings of the Convention against this unfortunate general, are chiefly interesting from the evidence they afford of the clear perception which those at the head of affairs had obtained of the principles in the military art to which the subsequent successes of the Republican forces were chiefly owing. "For long," said Barère, "the principle established by the great Frederick has been recognised, that the best way to take advantage of the courage of the soldier, is to accumulate the troops in particular points in large masses. Instead of doing this, you have divided them into separate detachments, and the generals entrusted with their command have generally had to combat superior forces. The Committee of Public Salvation, fully aware of the danger, had sent the most positive instructions to the generals to fight in large masses; you have disregarded their orders, and, in consequence, reverses have followed."² From these expressions, it is not difficult to recognise the influence which

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Sept. 15.

¹ Jom. iv.

55, 65, 66.

Ann. Reg.

1793, 383.

Th. v. 246.

247. Toul.

iv. 55.

Hard. ii. 369.

68.

And Houchard is arrested and executed.

² Corresp. du Corn. de Salut Publique, i. 231. Jom. iv. 69. Toul. iv. 130.

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69.
 Maubeuge is
 besieged.
 Jourdan
 takes the
 command of
 the army.
 Sept. 29.

the master mind of Carnot had already acquired in the direction of military affairs.

To compensate so many reverses, the Allies at length sat down before Maubeuge; an important fortress, the possession of which would have opened the plains of St Quentin and the capital to invasion, and the siege of which, undertaken at an earlier period, and by the main strength of their forces, would have determined, in all probability, the success of the war. Landrecy was already blockaded, and the French troops, avowedly inferior in the field, were all concentrated in intrenched camps within their own frontier. A vigorous effort was indispensable to prevent the Allies from carrying these strongholds, and taking up their winter quarters without opposition in the French territory. In these alarming circumstances, the Committee of Public Salvation alone did not despair of the fortunes of the Republic. Trusting with confidence to their own energy, and the immense multitude of the levies ordered, they took the most vigorous measures for the public defence, and, by incessantly urging on the new conscripts, soon raised the forces in the different intrenched camps, on the Flemish frontier, to one hundred and thirty thousand men. Great part, it is true, formed but a motley group; peasants, without arms or uniforms, fiercely debating every question of politics, forming themselves into battalions, and choosing their own officers, presented a force little competent to face, in the open field, the regular forces of Austria and the Confederation. But the possession of so many fortified towns and intrenched camps gave them the means of organising and disciplining these tumultuary masses, and enabled the regular troops, amounting to a hundred thousand men, to keep the field.¹ At the head of the whole was placed General JOURDAN,* a young

¹ Toul. iv.
 133, 134.
 Jom. iv. 112,
 114, 115, 116.

* Jean Baptiste Jourdan, one of the first generals of the Revolution who rose to great distinction, and afterwards became Marshal of France, was born at Limoges on the 2d April 1762. His father was an obscure surgeon; and he enlisted at the age of sixteen as a simple private in the regiment of Auxerrois. He served in that capacity in the American war, and having returned to France on the termination of that contest, he obtained his discharge. Soon after he married a *marchande des modes*, and set up a haberdashery shop, but on so humble a scale, that the future marshal of France carried his pack on his back from fair to fair. In autumn 1791, when recruits for the army were enlisted in every part of France, he entered as a volunteer in one of the new battalions; and, as his experience gave him a great advantage over his pacific comrades, he was at once named by acclamation chief of the second battalion of Haute Vienne

officer, hitherto untried in separate command, though distinguished in subordinate situations, but who, placed between victory and the scaffold, had sufficient confidence in his own talents to accept the perilous alternative.

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At the same time the most energetic measures were taken by the Committee of Public Salvation. All France was declared in a state of siege, and the authorities authorised to take all the steps necessary to provide for the public defence in such an emergency. "The revolutionary laws," said Robespierre, "must be executed with rapidity; delay and inactivity have been the cause of our reverses. Henceforward the time allowed for the execution of the laws must be fixed, and delay punished with death."

70.
Vigorous
measures of
the Commit-
tee of Pub-
lic Salvation.

St Just drew a sombre picture of the state of the Republic, and the necessity of striving vigorously against the manifold dangers which surrounded them. Having excited the highest degree of terror in the Assembly, they obtained their consent to the following resolutions:—That the subsistence requisite for each department should be accurately estimated, and all the superfluity placed at the disposal of the state, and subjected to forced requisitions, either for the armies, the cities, or departments, that stood in need of it: that these requisitions should be exclusively regulated by a commission appointed for that purpose by the Convention: that Paris should be provisioned for a year; a tribunal instituted for the trial of all those who should commit any offence against these measures, destined to provide for the public subsistence: that the government of France should be declared revolutionary till the conclusion of a general peace, and, until that arrived, a dictatorial power should be vested in the Committee of Public Sal-

At its head he served during the campaign of 1792 under Lafayette; in the whole of which the admirable condition of the battalion, as well as his own courage and skill, attracted general attention. In consequence he was, on 27th May 1793, appointed general of brigade, and two months after general of division, in which last capacity he commanded the advanced guard of Houchard, which defeated the English and raised the siege of Dunkirk. By a singular combination of chances, characteristic of those days of Revolution, the same victory which brought Houchard, the commander-in-chief, to the guillotine, raised Jourdan, who led the advanced guard, to the highest destinies; for he was shortly after appointed by Carnot to the command of the great army destined to raise the siege of Maubeuge. He gained the battle of Fleurus in 1794; but was entirely defeated by the Archduke Charles in Germany in 1796, and by Wellington in Spain in 1813, and was rather a methodical, calm, and intrepid general, than endowed with any great genius for war.—*Biographie Universelle*, lxxiii. 294, 296.

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¹ Hist. Parl.
xxvi. 147,
181. Th. v.
378.

71.

Vast forces
of the Allies,
and firmness
of the Con-
vention.

² Journ. iv.
118, 121, 129.
Toul. iv.
135.

72.

Jourdan ad-
vances to
raise the
siege.
Battle of
Wattignies,
and raising
of the siege.

vation and the Convention; and that a revolutionary army, consisting of ~~Ni~~ ^{six} thousand men, and twelve hundred cannoniers, should be established at Paris, and cantoned there at the expense of the more opulent among the citizens. It was proposed in the Cordeliers, that to this should be added a provision for the establishment of a moving guillotine, to be attached to every army; but this was not adopted by the Convention. The revolutionary army was instantly raised, and composed of the most ardent Jacobins; and the Commission of Subsistence installed in its important and all-powerful sovereignty.¹

The force of the Allies was still above a hundred and twenty thousand strong; and displayed a numerous and splendid array of cavalry, to which there was nothing comparable on the side of the Republicans. But after taking into account the blockading and besieging forces, and those stationed at a distance, they could not bring above sixty thousand into the field. This army was, early in October, concentrated between Maubeuge and Avennes, where they awaited the approach of the force destined to raise the siege. This measure was now become indispensably necessary, as the condition of the garrison of Maubeuge was daily growing more desperate, and the near approach of the besiegers' batteries had spread terror in the city, and discouragement among the soldiers. Imitating the firmness of the Roman Senate, the Convention had sold the estates of the emigrants on which the Allies were encamped, and sent the most peremptory orders to Jourdan, to attack, without delay, the enemy's force, and drive him out of the French territory. The Duke of York, too, hearing of the concentration of the Republican force, was rapidly advancing with above twenty-five thousand men, and unless the attack was speedily made, it was certain that his force would be joined to the allied army.²

Impelled by so many motives, Jourdan approached the Austrian position, the key of which was the village of Wattignies. After some skirmishing on the 14th, a general battle took place on the 15th October, in which, after varying success, the Republicans were worsted with the loss of twelve hundred men. Instructed by this failure, that a change of the method of attack was indispensable,

Jourdan, in the night, accumulated his forces against the decisive point, and at break of day, on the 16th, assailed Wattignies with three columns, while a concentric fire of artillery shattered the troops who defended it. In the midst of the roar of cannon, which were discharged with uncommon vigour, the Republican airs which rose from the French lines could be distinctly heard by the Austrians. The village was speedily carried by this skilful combination of force, while, at the same time, the appearance of the reserve of Jourdan on the left flank of the Allies completed the discouragement of Cobourg, and induced a general retreat, after sustaining a loss of six thousand men. This resolution was unfortunate and unnecessary, for, on other points, his army had been eminently successful, and the arrival of the Duke of York, who was within a day's march, would have enabled him to maintain his position, and convert his partial into a total success. It is related in Roman history, that on one occasion, after a doubtful battle, some god called out in the night that they had lost one man less than their enemies, and in consequence they kept their ground, and gained all the advantages of a victory. How often does such tenacious firmness convert an incipient disaster into an important advantage !¹

The raising of the siege, and retreat of the Allies beyond the Sambre, exposed to view the gigantic works which they had constructed for the reduction of the city, and which, with a little more vigour on their part in concentrating their forces, would undoubtedly have proved successful. As it was, the success of the Republicans on this point counterbalanced the alarming intelligence received from other quarters, and allayed a dangerous ferment which was commencing in the capital. The advantage gained by them in this action proved how incompetent the old and methodical tactics of the Imperialists were to contend with the new and able system which Carnot had introduced into the Republican armies, and which their immense levies enabled them to execute with reckless audacity. Jourdan had nearly sixty thousand men to raise the siege. By leaving only fifteen thousand to man the works, Cobourg might have opposed to him a nearly equal force; and an action, under such circumstances, from the

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1793.
16th Oct.

¹ Harl. ii.
406, 409.
Join. iv. 134.
135. Th. v.
328, 330
Toul iv.
136, 138.

73.
Causes of
this disaster
to the Allies.

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1793.

1 Join. iv.
134, 148.
Toul. iv.
136.

great inferiority of the French in discipline, would infallibly have led to a defeat, which would speedily have brought about the reduction of the town. Instead of which, by leaving thirty-five thousand round the fortress, he exposed himself, with only thirty thousand men, to the shock of sixty thousand Republicans, and ultimately was compelled to raise the siege.¹

74.
Conclusion
of the cam-
paign, and
appoint-
ment of
Pichegru to
the com-
mand of the
army.

Nothing more of importance was undertaken in Flanders before the close of the campaign; a movement of the French, threatening the right of the Allies towards the sea, was not persisted in, and, after various unimportant changes, both parties went into winter quarters. The headquarters of Cobourg were established at Bayay; those of the Republicans at Guicé, where a vast intrenched camp was formed for the protection and disciplining of the Revolutionary masses which were daily arriving for the army. Insatiable in their expectations of success, the Committee of Public Salvation removed Jourdan from the supreme command, and conferred it on PICHEGRU,* formerly a schoolfellow of Napoleon, an officer distinguished in the campaign on the Rhine, a favourite of Robespierre and St Just, and possessed of the talent, activity, and enterprise suited to those perilous times, when the risk was greater to a commander from domestic tyranny than foreign warfare.²

2 Th. v. 328,
332. Toul.
iv. 136, 137.
Join. iv. 134,
148.

After the capture of Mayence, the Imperialists, reinforced by forty thousand excellent troops, who had been employed in the siege of that city, could have assembled one hundred thousand men for offensive operations in the

* Charles Pichegru was born at Arbois, in 1761, of obscure parents. He received the rudiments of education in his native town at the college of the Minimes, where he early evinced an extraordinary talent for the exact sciences. So much were the worthy monks who presided over that establishment struck with his abilities in this respect, that they sent him to the military college of Brienne, where he was at the time Napoleon entered it, to whom he was for some years a sort of preceptor, like the monitors in the Lancasterian schools. At the age of twenty he enlisted as a private in the 1st regiment of artillery, and served in the last campaigns of the American war, and studied alike in his own regiment and in the ranks of his enemies the theory and practice of artillery. From the English marine service, in particular, to which he was often opposed, he adopted several important improvements; the knowledge of which gave him such an advantage over his other comrades, that, on his return, he was made adjutant of his regiment, which rank he held when the Revolution broke out. Conscious of talents which had not yet attained their proper sphere of action, he immediately and vehemently adopted its principles; but from the very first abstained from the innumerable crimes

plains of the Palatinate, while those of the enemy did not exceed eighty thousand. Every thing promised success to vigorous operations ; but the Allies, paralysed by intestine divisions, remained in an inexplicable state of inactivity, and separated their fine army into four corps, which were placed opposite to the lengthened lines of their adversaries. The Prussians were chiefly to blame for this torpor : they had secretly adopted the resolution, now that Mayence, the barrier of Northern Germany, was secure, to contribute no further efficient aid to the prosecution of the war. For two months they remained there in perfect inactivity, the jealousy of the sovereigns concerning the affairs of Poland being equalled by the rivalry of the generals for the command of the armies. Both monarchies had bitter cause afterwards to lament this inaction ; for never again were their own armies on the Rhine so formidable, or those of the Republicans in such a state of disorganisation. Wearied at length with the torpor of their opponents, and pressed by the reiterated orders of the Convention to undertake something decisive, the French general, Moreau, who commanded the army of the Moselle, commenced an attack on the Prussian corps posted at Permasin. The Republican columns advanced with intrepidity to the attack, but when they approached the Prussian redoubts, a terrible storm of grape arrested their advance ; and at the same time their flanks were turned by the Duke of Brunswick, and a heavy fire of artillery carried disorder into their masses, which soon fell back, and precipitated themselves in confusion into the neighbouring ravines. In this affair, the Republicans lost four thousand men,¹ and twenty-two pieces of

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75

Campaign
on the
Rhine.
Inactivity of
the Prus-
sians, but
the French
are defeat-
ed at Permasin.

Sept. 14.

¹ Jom. iv.
75. 88, 91.
Toul. iv.
134, 140.
Hard. ii.
342.

which were committed in its name. He frequented the Jacobin clubs which, in imitation of the great one at Paris, had arisen in all the departments, and was president of that at Besançon, when, on the formation of a battalion of volunteers in that town in April 1792, he was by acclamation chosen its chief. Pichegru found his men a motley crowd of ardent politicians, who were discussing all subjects, civil and military, with the same license as in the Jacobin club ; and it was with no small difficulty, and only by the combined influence of a great character and superior acquaintance with military affairs, that he succeeded in reducing them to some degree of subordination. His first campaign was on the Upper Rhine, at the head of his battalion, in 1792 ; but at the close of that year he was appointed, from his great abilities, to a situation on the staff, and he was rapidly promoted to the rank of general of brigade and of division. In October 1793, he received the command of the army on the Upper Rhine from St Just and Le Bas, the Commissioners of the Convention, and from thenceforward his name became blended with the stream of European history.—See *Bibliographie Universelle*, xxxiv. 274, 275.

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76.

Their lines
are stormed
at Weissen-
berg.
They are
totally
routed.
Oct. 13.

cannon ; a disaster which might have proved fatal to the campaign, had it been as much improved as it was neglected by the allied commanders.

The King of Prussia, a few days after, left the army to repair to Poland, in order to pursue, in concert with Russia, his plans of aggrandisement at the expense of that unhappy country ; and the Allies, having at length agreed on a plan of joint operations, resumed the offensive. The French occupied the ancient and celebrated lines of Weissenberg, constructed in former times for the protection of the Rhenish frontier from German invasion. They stretched from the town of Lauterburg on the Rhine, through the village of Weissenberg to the Vosges mountains, and thus closed all access from that side into Alsace. For four months that they had been occupied by the Republicans, all the resources of art had been employed in strengthening them. The recent successes of the Allies had brought them to the extreme left of this position, and they formed the design of attacking it from left to right, and forcing an abandonment of the whole intrenchments. A simultaneous assault was made by the Prussians, under the Duke of Brunswick, on the left of the lines, by the defiles in the Vosges mountains, while the Austrians, under Prince Waldeck, crossed the Rhine, and turned the right, and Wurmser himself, with the main body, endeavoured to force the centre. The attack on the right by Lauterburg, obtained only a momentary success. But Wurmser carried several redoubts in the centre, and soon got possession of Weissenberg ; and the left having been turned and forced back, the whole army retired in confusion, and some of the fugitives fled as far as Strasburg. Such was the tardiness of the Allies, that the French lost only one thousand men in this general rout, which, if duly improved, might have occasioned the loss of their whole army.¹

¹ Hard. ii.
424, 425.
Toul. iv.
140, 141,
142. Join.
iv. 96, 97,
104.

77.

Leads to no
results.
Capture of
Fort Vau-
ban, and
cruel re-
venge of the
French in
Alsace.

But this important success, which once more opened the territory of the Republic to a victorious enemy, and spread the utmost consternation through the towns of Alsace, led to no results ; and by developing the designs of Austria upon this province, contributed to widen the breach between that power and her wavering ally. Although, therefore, a powerful reaction commenced among the nobles in Alsace, and a formidable party was formed

in Strasburg, to favour the imperial projects, nothing material was undertaken by their armies. Wurmser wasted in festivity and rejoicings the precious moments of incipient terror; the Convention got time to recover from its alarm, and the Committee of Public Salvation took the most energetic measures to restore the democratic fervour in the shaken districts. A Revolutionary force, under the command of a ferocious leader named Bandet, traversed the province, confiscating without mercy the property of the suspected individuals, and spreading, by the multitude of their arrests, the fear of death among all. "Marat," said Bandet, "has only demanded two hundred thousand heads; were they a million we would furnish them." To take advantage of the excitement occasioned by these menaces, Wurmser advanced to the neighbourhood of Strasburg, where the whole constituted authorities offered to surrender it to the Imperialists, in the name of Louis XVII. The Austrian commander, however, fettered by orders from Vienna, which prohibited him from doing any thing that might prejudice their system of methodical conquest, declined to take possession of the city on these terms, and moved the Prussians to Saverne, in order to force back the Republicans who were accumulating on that point. This project proved entirely unsuccessful; the Prussians were driven back; and Wurmser, unable to undertake the siege of Strasburg by force, was obliged to withdraw, and confine his operations to the blockade of Landau and siege of Fort Vauban, which capitulated with its garrison of three thousand men on the 14th November. The inhabitants of Strasburg, thus abandoned to their fate, experienced the whole weight of Republican vengeance. Seventy persons of the most distinguished families were put to death, while terror and confiscation reinstated the sway of the Convention over the unhappy province. No sooner was the extent of the conspiracy ascertained, than St Just and Le Bas were dispatched by the Convention, and speedily put in force the terrific energy of the Revolution. The blood of the Royalists immediately flowed in torrents; it was a sufficient ground for condemnation, that any inhabitant had remained in the villages occupied by the Allies;¹ and a fourth of the families of the province, decimated by

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¹ Hard. ii.
425, 426.
Toul. iv.
143, 144.
186. Th.
vi. 48, 49.
Jom. iv
104, 105,
111, 130.

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78.

Secession
of Prussia
from the
alliance.

the guillotine, fled into the neighbouring districts of Switzerland, and were speedily enrolled in the lists of proscription.*

The secession of Prussia from the confederacy now became daily more and more evident. Wurmser in vain endeavoured to engage its army in any combined movements; orders from the cabinet constrained the Duke of Brunswick to a line of conduct as prejudicial to his fame as a commander as it was injurious to the character of his country. On his return to Berlin, Frederick William was assailed by so many representations from his ministers as to the deplorable state of the finances, and the exhaustion of the national strength, in a contest foreign to the real interests of the nation, at the very time when the affairs of Poland required their undivided attention, and the greatest possible display of force in that quarter, that he at first adopted the resolution to recall all his troops from the Rhine, except the small contingent which he was bound to furnish as a prince of the empire; and orders to that effect were actually transmitted to the Prussian general. The cabinet of Vienna, informed of their danger, made the most pressing remonstrances against such an untimely and ruinous defection, in which they were so well seconded by those of London and St Petersburg, that this resolution was rescinded, and in consideration of a large Austrian subsidy, Prussia engaged to continue the contest. But orders were nevertheless given to the Duke of Brunswick to temporise as much as possible, and engage the Prussian troops in no serious enterprise, or any conquest which might turn to the advantage of the Austrians. The effect of this soon appeared in the removal of the Prussian mortars and cannon from the lines before Landau,¹ at the moment when the bombardment was going on with the greatest

¹ Hard. ii.
425, 431.

* "Il était temps que St Just vint auprès de cette malheureuse armée, et qu'il portât de vigoureuse coups de hache au fanatisme des Alsaciens, à leur indolence, à leur stupidité Allemande, à la cupidité, à la perfidie des riches. Il a tout vivifié, ramené, régénéré; et pour achever cet ouvrage, il nous arrive de tous les coins une colonne d'apôtres révolutionnaires de solides sans-culottes. *Sain*, *Guillotine* est dans la plus brillante activité, et la bienfaisante terreur produit ici d'une manière miraculeuse ce qu'on devait espérer d'un siècle au moins par la raison et la philosophie. Quel maître bougré que ce garçon-la! La collection de ses arrêtés sera sans contredit un des plus beaux monumens historiques de la Révolution. Le moment de la justice terrible est arrivé, et toutes les têtes coupables doivent passer sous le niveau national."—GATTEAU *au Citoyen DALBIGNY*; *Strasbourg*, 27 *Brunaire*, An. ii.—*Papiers trouvés chez ROBERT PIERRE*, ü 247.

prospect of success. Shortly after they withdrew so large a part of the blockading force, that the garrison was enabled to communicate freely with the adjacent country.

Meanwhile the Committee of Public Salvation, very different from their tardy and divided opponents, did not confine their views to the subjugation of the Royalists in Alsace. They aspired to the complete deliverance of the Republican territory from the enemy's forces. To raise the blockade of Landau, thirty thousand men from the armies of the Moselle and the Rhine were placed under the orders of Pichegru, who were designed to penetrate the allied lines between the cantonments of the Austrian and Prussian forces; and these were supported by thirty-five thousand under General Hoche, who advanced from the side of La Sarre. After some preparatory movements, various success, and many partial actions, the Republicans attacked the covering army of the Duke of Brunswick, in great force, on the morning of the 26th December, who were in position near the castle of Geisberg, a little in front of Weissenberg. Such was the dissension between the two commanders, in consequence of the evident reluctance of the Prussians to engage, that a warm altercation took place between them, in presence of their respective officers, on the field of battle. The result, as might have been expected, was, that the Allies, vigorously attacked in their centre, were driven from their position; and after some ineffectual attempts to make a stand on the left bank of the Rhine, their whole army, in great confusion, crossed to the right bank, at Phillipsberg, after raising the blockade of Landau, leaving their recent conquest of Fort Vauban to its fate, and completely evacuating in that quarter the French territory. Spires and Worms were speedily reconquered, and Fort Vauban soon after evacuated. The Republican armies, rapidly advancing, appeared before the gates of Mannheim; and Germany, so recently victorious, began to tremble for its own frontier. These important results demonstrated the superior military combination which was now exerted on the part of the French to that of the Allies. Forty thousand Prussians and Saxons were in a state of inaction on the other side of the Vosges mountains, while the Austrians, overmatched by superior and concentrated forces, were driven across the Rhine.

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79.

Disunion of the Allies, who are driven over the Rhine, and the siege of Landau raised. Nov. 17.

Dec. 26.

Dec. 30.

Jan. 19,
1794.

¹ Hard. ii. 439, 441
Jom. iv. 154, 177. Th. vi. 48, 49.
Toul. iv. 221, 227.

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1793.

The French accumulated forces from different armies, to break through one weakly defended point, while the Allies were in such a state of discord, that they could not, even in the extremest peril, render any effectual assistance to each other.* It was not difficult to foresee what would be the result of such a contest.†¹

80.
Campaign
on the
Spanish
frontier.
Successes
of the
Spaniards
on the Bi-
dassoa.

The campaign on the Pyrenean frontier during this year, was not characterised by any event of importance. At the first breaking out of the war, in February, the Spanish government made vigorous exertions to increase its forces, and the zeal and patriotism of the inhabitants soon supplied the deficiencies of the military establishment, and enabled them to put two considerable armies on foot. Two armies were formed, one of thirty thousand men, destined to invade Roussillon; the other of twenty-five thousand, to penetrate by the Bidassoa, on the side of Bayonne. The Republicans on the western entrance of the Pyrenees, occupied a line from St Jean Pied-de-Port to the mouth of the Bidassoa, strengthened by three intrenched camps, while the Spaniards were stationed on the heights of St Marcial, the destined theatre of honourable achievement to their arms in a more glorious war. On the 14th April, the Spaniards, from their position, opened a vigorous fire on the French line, and during the confusion occasioned by it among their opponents, crossed the Bidassoa, and carried a fort which was soon after abandoned. This attack was only the prelude of a more decisive one, which took place on the 1st May, when the French were driven from one of their camps with the loss of fifteen pieces of cannon; and on the 6th June, they were expelled from another stronghold, and forced into St Jean Pied-de-Port, with the loss of all the cannon and ammunition which it contained. After

April 14.

May 1.

June 6.

* Such was the dissension between the Austrians and Prussians, that their respective commanders published mutual recriminations against each other, and fought duels in support of their respective sides of the question. —ILLARD. ii. 442.

† So manifestly were the divisions of the Allies and the defection of the Prussians, the cause of all the disasters of the campaign on the German frontier, that the Duke of Brunswick himself did not hesitate to ascribe them to that cause. On 24th January 1794, he wrote to Prince Louis of Prussia in these terms: "I have been enveloped in circumstances as distressing as they were extraordinary, which have imposed upon me the painful necessity of acting as I have done. What a misfortune that external and internal dissensions should so frequently have paralysed the movements of the armies, at the very time when the greatest activity was necessary! If, after the fall of Mayence, they had fallen on Houchard, whom they would have beaten, they would have prevented the march of troops

these disasters, the Republican commander was indefatigable in his endeavours to restore the courage and discipline of his troops; and, deeming them at length sufficiently experienced for offensive operations, he made a general attack, on the 29th August, on the posts which the Spaniards had fortified on the French territory, but was repulsed with considerable loss, and disabled from undertaking any movement of consequence for the remainder of the campaign.¹

Operations of more importance took place during the same campaign on the eastern side. The Spaniards, under Don Ricardos, in the middle of April, invaded Roussillon; and on the 21st, a small body gained an advantage over an equal number of French. This was followed soon after by a general attack on the French camp, which ended in the defeat of the Republicans. Soon after, the forts of Bellegarde and Villa Franca were taken; and Ricardos, pursuing his advantages, on the 29th August attacked a large body of French at Millas, who were totally defeated, with the loss of fifteen pieces of cannon. The result of this was, that the invaders passed Perpignan, and interrupted the communication between Languedoc and Roussillon. But the Convention, alarmed at the rapid progress of the Spaniards, at length took the most vigorous measures to reinforce their armies; and the energetic government of the Committee of Public Salvation restored success to the Republican standards. Two divisions of the French, about fifteen thousand strong, were directed to move against the Spaniards under Don Juan Courten, who had not above six thousand men at Peyrestortes; and their attack was

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1793.

¹ Journ. iv.
27, 282.
Ann. Reg.
xxxiii. 396,
397, 398.

81
And Eastern
Pyrenees.
Invasion of
Roussillon,
and defeat of
the French
at Truelhas.
April 21.
May 18.
Aug. 29.

Sept. 17.

to the north; and, by consequence, the checks of Dunkirk and Maubeuge; Sarre Louis, ill provisioned and destitute at that period of any shelter from a bombardment, would have fallen in fifteen days. Alsace thus would have been turned by the Sarre: the capture of the lines of Lautern would have been attended with more substantial benefits: and if the Republican army of the Rhine had been by that means separated from that of the Moselle, Landau would infallibly have fallen. I implore you to use your efforts to prevent the undue separation of the army into detachments; when this is the case, weak at every point, it is liable to be cut up in detail. At Mayence the fruits of the whole war were lost; and there is no hope that a third campaign will repair the disasters of the two preceding. The same causes will divide the Allied Powers which have hitherto divided them: the movements of the armies will suffer from them as they have suffered; their march will be embarrassed, retarded, prevented: and the delay in the re-establishment of the Prussian army, unavoidable perhaps from political causes, will become the cause in the succeeding campaign of incalculable disasters."—See HARD. ii. 444, 448.

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Sept. 22.

1. *Jom. iv.*
241, 244,
246, 248.
Ann. Reg.
xxxiii. 399.

82.
Second de-
feat of the
French at
Perpignan.

Dec. 7.

combined with so much skill, that the enemy was assailed in front, both flanks, and rear, at the same time. After a gallant defence, the Spaniards were forced to commence a retreat, which, though conducted for some time in good order, at length was converted into a flight, during which they lost one thousand men killed, and fifteen hundred prisoners, besides all their artillery and camp equipage. Elated by this success, the Republicans proposed a general attack upon the Spanish army, which took place at Truellas. Twenty thousand chosen troops, divided into three columns, advanced against the Spanish camp. After an obstinate resistance, that which attacked the centre, under the command of Dagobert, carried the intrenchments, and was on the point of gaining a glorious victory, when Courten, coming up with the Spanish reserve, prolonged the combat, and gave time for Don Ricardos, who had defeated the attack on his left, to advance at the head of four regiments of cavalry, which decided the day. Three French battalions laid down their arms, and the remainder, formed into squares, retreated in spite of the utmost efforts of the Spanish cavalry, not, however, till they had sustained a loss of four thousand men and ten pieces of artillery.¹

Dagobert was immediately displaced from the supreme command for this disaster; and the Republicans, under Davoust,* being shortly after reinforced by fifteen thousand men, levied under the decree of the 23d August, Ricardos was constrained, notwithstanding his success, to remain upon the defensive. He retired, therefore, to a strong intrenched camp near Borlon, where he was attacked on the 3d October by the French forces. From that time to the beginning of December, a variety of actions took place, unattended by any decisive advantage on either side, but without the Spanish troops ever being dislodged from their position. At that period Ricardos, having been strongly reinforced, resolved to resume the offensive. Early on the 7th December, he disposed his troops in four columns, and having surprised their advanced posts, commenced an unexpected attack upon the French lines. The Republicans, many of whom were inexperienced levies, instantly took to flight, and the whole army was routed, with the loss of forty-six pieces of cannon, and

* See a biography of Davoust—*infra*, c. xxiii. § 50.

two thousand five hundred men. The Spaniards followed up this success by another expedition against the town of Port Vendre, which they carried, with all the artillery mounted on its defences; and soon after, Collioure surrendered to their forces, with above eighty pieces of cannon; while the Marquis Amarillas overthrew the right, and carried such terror into the inexperienced forces of the Republicans, that many battalions disbanded themselves and fled into the interior. In the end the whole fell back in confusion under the cannon of Perpignan. By these repeated disasters, the French army was so much discouraged, that almost all the National Guards left their colours, and the general-in-chief announced to the Convention, that he was only at the head of eight thousand men. Had the Spanish commander been aware of the state of his opponents, he might, by a vigorous attack, have completed their ruin before the reinforcements arrived from Toulon, which, in the beginning of the following month, restored the balance of the contending forces.¹

More important events took place on the side of the Maritime Alps. In that quarter, at the conclusion of the preceding campaign, the French remained masters of the territory and city of Nice. An expedition, projected by the Republicans against Sardinia, totally failed. When the season was so far advanced as to permit operations in the Maritime Alps, the Piedmontese army, consisting of thirty thousand natives and ten thousand Austrians, was posted along their summits, with the centre at Saorgio, strongly fortified. In the beginning of June, the Republicans, twenty-five thousand strong, commenced an attack in five columns; but after some partial success, they resumed their positions, and being soon after weakened by detachments for the siege of Toulon, remained on the defensive till the end of July, when they made themselves masters of the Col d'Argentière and the Col de Sauteron, which excited the utmost alarm in the Court of Turin, and prevented them from sending those succours to the army in Savoy, which the powerful diversion occasioned by the siege of Lyons so evidently recommended.²

The insurrection in Lyons, to be immediately noticed, offered an opportunity for establishing themselves in the south of France, which could hardly have been hoped for

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

Dec. 14.

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Dec. 20.

1 Jom. iv.

251, 262,

270, 273.

Ann. Keg.

xxxiii 400.

83.

Campaign in

the Mari-

time Alps.

Feb. 14.

2 Jom iv.

181, 184.

Toul. iv.

216, 217,

218. Th.

v. 38.

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

84.
Feeble r-
ruption on
the side of
Chambery.

Aug. 15.

Sept. 11.

1 Jom. iv.
195, 206.
Bot. i. 294,
300—309.
Th. v. 307,
310.

85.
Great dis-
content in
the south of
France.

by the allied powers. Had sixty thousand regular troops descended from the Alps in Italy, and taken advantage of the effervescence which prevailed in Toulon, Marseilles, and Lyons, the consequences might have been incalculable. But such were the divisions among the Allies, that this golden opportunity, never to recur, was neglected, and the court of Turin contented themselves, during that unhopd for diversion, with merely aiming at the expulsion of the French from the valleys of the Arc and the Isère. This was no difficult matter, as the Piedmontese troops were already masters of the summits of Mont Cenis and the Little St Bernard, and the French in the valleys beneath were severely weakened by detachments for the siege of Lyons. In the middle of August, the Sardinian columns descended the ravines of St Jean de Maurienne and Montiers, under the command of General Gordon; and after some trifling engagements, drove the Republicans from these narrow and winding valleys, and compelled them to take refuge under the cannon of Montmelian. But here terminated the success of their feeble invasion. Kellerman, hearing of the advance of the Sardinians, left the siege of Lyons to General Durnuy, and hastily returning to Chambery, roused the National Guard to resist the enemy. At the moment that they were preparing to follow up their advantages, the French commander anticipated them by a brisk attack, and, after a feeble resistance, drove them from the whole ground they had gained, as far as the foot of Mont Cenis. Thus a campaign, from which, if boldly conducted, the liberation of all the south-east of France might have been expected, terminated, after an ephemeral success, in ultimate disgrace.¹

But while the operations of the Allies in their vicinity were thus inefficient, the efforts of the French themselves were of a more decided and glorious character. The insurrection of 31st May, which subjected the legislature to the mob of Paris, and established the Reign of Terror through all France, excited the utmost indignation in the southern provinces. Marseilles, Toulon, and Lyons, openly espoused the Girondist cause; they were warmly attached to freedom, but it was that regulated freedom which provides for the protection of all, not that which subjects the more opulent classes to the despotism of the lower. The discon-

tents went on increasing till the middle of July, when Chalier and Riard, the leaders of the Jacobin Club at Lyons, were put to death. From that moment these cities were declared in a state of insurrection; and the Girondist leaders, perceiving that the Royalist party had gained the ascendancy in Lyons, withdrew, and Preey was named to the command of the armed force. They immediately began to cast cannon, raise intrenchments, and make every preparation for a vigorous defence.¹

The general discontent first broke out into open violence in Marseilles. At the first intelligence, Kellerman dispatched General Carteaux to prevent a corps of ten thousand men, from that city, from effecting a junction with the volunteers from Lyons. Had this junction been effected, there can be no doubt that the whole of the South of France would have thrown off the yoke of the Convention. But Carteaux, after overawing Avignon and Pont d'Esprit, encountered the Marseilles corps, first at Salons, and afterwards at Septièmes, where he totally defeated it, and the following day entered Marseilles. Terror instantly resumed its sway; the prisons were emptied; all the leaders of the Girondists thrown into confinement, and the guillotine, ever in the rear of the Republican armies, installed in bloody and irresistible sovereignty.²

A large proportion of the citizens of Marseilles fled to Toulon, where they spread the most dismal accounts of the sufferings of their fellow-citizens, and the fate which awaited that important town if it fell into the hands of the Republicans. It already possessed a population of twenty-five thousand souls, and was warmly opposed to the Revolution, from the suffering which had involved its population ever since its commencement, and the number of officers connected with the aristocracy who had enjoyed situations in the marine, under the ancient government. In the extremity to which they were reduced, threatened by the near approach of the Republican forces, and destitute of any adequate means of defence, the inhabitants saw no alternative but to open their harbour to the English fleet, which was cruising in the vicinity, and proclaim Louis XVII. as king. The primary sections were accordingly convoked, and the proposal was unanimously agreed to. The Dauphin was pro-

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XIII.

1793.

¹ Th. v. 142,
143. Toul.
iv. 55.

^{86.}
Abortive
insurrection
at Mar-
seilles.

² Toul. iv.
63, 66.
Jom. iv 208,
209. Th. v.
74.

^{87.}
Revolt at
Toulon,
which opens
its gates to
the English.

27th Aug.

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

1 Jan. iv.
209, 211.
Toul. iv.
67, 69.89
Revolt and
siege of
Lyons.

claimed; the English squadrons entered the harbour, and the crews of seven ships of the line, who proved refractory, were allowed to retire, while those of the remainder joined the inhabitants. Shortly afterwards the Spanish squadron arrived, bringing with it a considerable reinforcement of land troops, and the allied forces, eight thousand strong, took possession of all the forts in the city. The conduct of the British on this occasion showed that their government was actuated by very different principles from those which had been agreed to at the conference of Antwerp, and exemplified at Valenciennes. Admiral Hood engaged in the most solemn manner, in two different proclamations, to take possession of Toulon solely and exclusively in the name, and for the behoof, of Louis XVII., and to restore the fleet to the monarchical government of France on a general peace.¹*

Carteaux immediately ordered a detachment of his forces to advance against the insurgents, but the garrison, supported by a body of the National Guards of Toulon, marched to meet them, and the Republicans, surprised, were obliged to fall back in confusion. This check proved the necessity of more energetic measures; a large portion of the army of Italy was recalled from the Alps, the National Guards of the neighbouring departments were called out, new levies ordered, and the directions of Robespierre immediately acted upon, that Lyons must be burned and razed to the ground, and then the siege of Toulon formed.

* In the first proclamation, Admiral Hood said, "If the people declare openly in favour of a monarchical government, and they resolve to put me in possession of the harbour, they shall receive all the succours which the squadron under my command can afford. I declare that property and persons shall be held sacred, we wish only to establish peace. When it is concluded, we shall restore the fleet to France, agreeably to the inventory which shall be made out." In the second he was equally explicit: "Considering that the Sections of Toulon, by the Commissioners whom they have sent to me, have made a solemn declaration in favour of Louis XVII. and a monarchical government, and that they will use their utmost efforts to break the chains which fetter their country, and re-establish the constitution, as it was accepted by their defunct sovereign in 1789; I repeat, by this present declaration, that I take possession of Toulon, and shall keep it solely as a deposit for Louis XVII., and that only till peace is re-established in France, which I trust is not far distant."—*Proclamation, 25th August 1793*; *HARD. II.* 357, 359. These were the true principles of the Anti-revolutionary war; very different from those proclaimed by the Austrians on the taking of Valenciennes and Condé. Nor was the subsequent destruction of the fleet, when Toulon was retaken by the Republicans, any departure from good faith in this transaction.—England was bound to restore the fleet to a monarchical government and Louis XVII., but not to hand it over to the Revolutionary government, the most bitter enemy of both.

At the first intelligence of the revolt of Lyons, Kellerman assembled eight thousand men, and a small train of artillery to observe the place. But this was totally insufficient even to maintain its ground before the armed population of the city, which soon amounted to thirty thousand men. A military chest was formed; a paper currency, guaranteed by the principal merchants, issued; cannon, in great numbers, cast at a foundery within the walls; and fortifications, under the direction of an able engineer, erected upon all the beautiful heights which encircle the city. The troops of the Republicans, though daily increasing, were for long unable to make head against forces so considerable, supported by the ardour of a numerous and enthusiastic population. During the whole of August, accordingly, and the beginning of September, the siege made little progress, and the batteries of the besiegers were scarcely armed. The besieged, meanwhile, made proposals for an accommodation; but the Commissaries for the Convention returned for answer—"Rebels! first show yourselves worthy of pardon, by acknowledging your crime; lay down your arms; deliver up the keys of your city, and deserve the clemency of the Convention, by a sincere repentance." But the inhabitants, well aware of the consequence of such submission, returned for answer, "Conduct so atrocious as yours proves what we have to expect from your clemency; we shall firmly await your arrival; and you will never capture the city but by marching over ruins and piles of dead."¹

No sooner were the Convention informed of the entrance of the English into Toulon, than they redoubled their efforts for the subjugation of Lyons. They indignantly rejected the advice of several of their members, in whose bosom the feelings of humanity were not utterly extinct, for an accommodation with the inhabitants, and took the most energetic measures for the prosecution of the siege. A hundred pieces of cannon, drawn from the arsenals of Besançon and Grenoble, were immediately mounted on the batteries; veteran troops selected from the army on the frontiers of Piedmont, and four corps formed, which on different sides pressed the outworks of the city. In a succession of contests in the outer intrenchments, the Lyonese evinced the most heroic valour; but although the success

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.
29th July.

1 Jom. iv.
146, 187.
Th. v. 310,
311. Ann.
Reg. xxviii.
406. Toul.
iv. 68, 71.

89.
Great efforts
of the Re-
publicans
for its re-
duction, and
cruel con-
duct of the
besiegers.

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

was frequently balanced, the besiegers upon the whole had the advantage, and the horrors of war, which they had so strenuously endeavoured to keep at a distance, at length fell on this devoted city. On the 24th September, a terrible bombardment and cannonade, with red-hot shot, was commenced, which was continued without intermission for a whole week. Night and day the flaming tempest fell on the quarter of St Clair, and speedily involved in conflagration the magnificent hotels of that opulent district, the splendid public buildings which had so long adorned the Place Bellecour, and the beautiful quays of the river. Soon after the arsenal blew up with a terrific explosion. At length the flames reached the great Hospital, one of the noblest monuments of the charity of the past age, now filled with the wounded and the dying, from every quarter of the town; a black flag was hoisted on its summit to avert the fury of the besiegers from that last asylum of humanity, but this only served to redouble their activity, and guide their shot, which were directed with such unerring aim, that after the flames had been two-and-forty times extinguished, it was burned to the ground.¹

1 Jom. iv.
187, 189.
Toul. iv. 71,
75. Th. v.
306. Tac.
xi. 105.
Ann. Reg.
lxxiii. 408.

90.
Dreadful
sufferings
of the in-
habitants.

The ravages of the bombardment, however, increased the sufferings of the inhabitants, without diminishing their means of defence. But soon after, the incessant assaults of the Republicans made them masters of the heights of St Croix, which commanded the city from a nearer position; and about the same time, the reinforcements which arrived from the southern departments, now thoroughly roused by the efforts of the Convention, enabled the besiegers to cut off all communication between the inhabitants and the country, on which they had hitherto depended for provisions. Before the end of September fifty thousand men were assembled before the walls; and, notwithstanding the most rigid economy in the distribution of food, the pangs of want began to be severely felt. Shortly after, the garrison of Valenciennes arrived, and by their skill in the management of artillery, gave a fatal preponderance to the besieging force, while Couthon came up with twenty-five thousand rude mountaineers from the quarter of Auvergne. The hopes of the inhabitants had been chiefly rested on a diversion from the side of Savoy, where the Piedmontese troops were slowly assembling for offensive

operations. But these expectations were cruelly disappointed. After a feeble irruption into the valley of St Jean de Maurienne, and some ephemeral success, the Sardinian army, as already noticed, was driven back in disgrace over Mount Cenis, having failed in taking advantage of an opportunity more favourable for the establishment of the Royalist party in the south of France than was ever again to recur. This disaster, coupled with the pressure of famine, now severely weakened the spirits of the besieged. Yet, though deserted by all the world, and assailed by a force which at length amounted to above sixty thousand men, the inhabitants nobly and resolutely maintained their defence. In vain the bombardment was continued with unexampled severity, and twenty-seven thousand bombs, five thousand shells, and eleven thousand red-hot shot, thrown into the city. Regardless of the iron storm, one half of the citizens manned the works, while the other half watched the flight of the burning projectiles, and carried water to the quarters where the conflagration broke forth.¹

But these efforts, however glorious, could not finally avert the stroke of fate. The Convention, irritated at the slow progress of the siege, deprived Kellerman of the command, and ordered him to the bar of the Convention to give an account of his conduct, although his talent and energy in repelling the Piedmontese invasion had been the salvation of the Republic. The command of the besieging army was given to General Doppet, who received orders instantly to reduce Lyons by fire and sword. To quicken his operations, the savage Couthon, as Commissioner of the Convention, was invested with a despotic authority over the generals, and he instantly resolved to carry Lyons by main force, and employ in the storm the whole sixty thousand men who were engaged in the siege. On the 29th September, a general attack was made by the new commander on the intrenchments of the besieged, the object of which was to force the fortified posts at the point of Perrache, near the confluence of the Saone and the Rhone. After an obstinate resistance, the batteries of St Foix, which commanded that important point, were carried by the Republicans; and the bridge of La Malatierre, which connected it with the opposite bank, was forced. No further intrenchments remained between the

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.
Sept. 30.

¹ Lac. xi.
107. Toul.
iv. 76. Th.
v. 513.
Jom. iv. 191.

91.
Their heroic
defence.

29th Sept.

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

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1 Lac. xi.
104, 108,
110 Ann
Reg. xxxi
410. Ju
iv. 192.
Th. v. 314.
315. T. 1.
iv 79. Bot.
247.

assailants and the city ; the last moment of Lyons seemed at hand. But Precy hastened to the scene of danger at the head of a chosen band of citizens ; the assailants were encountered and driven back, with the loss of above two thousand men, from the plain of Perrache, though, notwithstanding all his efforts, he could not prevent them from maintaining their ground on the bridge and heights of St Foix. But all these heroic efforts could not arrest the progress of a more fatal enemy within the walls. Famine was consuming the strength of the besieged. For long the women had renounced the use of bread, in order to reserve it for the combatants, but they were soon reduced to half a pound a-day of this humble fare. The remainder of the inhabitants lived on a scanty supply of oats, which was daily served out with the most rigid economy from the public magazine. But even these resources were at length exhausted ; in the beginning of October, provisions of every kind had failed : and the thirty Sections of Lyons, subdued by stern necessity, were compelled to nominate deputies to proceed to the hostile camp.¹

92.
Precy forces
his way
through the
besiegers'
lines.

The brave Precy, however, even in this extremity, disdained to submit. With generous devotion, he resolved to force his way, at the head of a chosen band, through the enemy's lines, and seek in foreign climes that freedom of which France had become unworthy. On the night of the 9th October, the heroic column, consisting of two thousand men, the flower of Lyons, set forth with their wives and children, and what little property they could save from the ruin of their fortunes. They began in two columns their perilous march, guided by the light of their burning habitations, amid the tears and blessings of those friends who remained behind. Scarcely had they set out, however, when a bomb fell into an ammunition waggon, by the explosion of which great numbers were killed. Notwithstanding this disaster, the head of the column broke the division opposed to it, and forced its way through the lines of the besiegers. But an overwhelming force soon assailed the centre and rear. As they proceeded, they found themselves enveloped on every side ; all the heights were lined with cannon, and every house filled with soldiers ; an indiscriminate massacre took place, in which men, women, and infants, alike perished ;² and of

¹ Ann. Reg.
xxxiii. 410.
Lac. xi. 113.
Th. v. 315.
Jom. iv. 194.

the whole who left Lyons, scarcely fifty forced their way with Pécy into the Swiss territories.

On the following day the Republicans took possession of Lyons. The troops observed strict discipline; they were lodged in barracks, or bivouacked on the Place Bellecour and the Terreaux: the inhabitants indulged a fleeting hope, that a feeling of humanity had at length touched the bosoms of their conquerors. They little knew the bitterness of Republican hatred. Lyons was not spared; it was only reserved for cold-blooded vengeance. No sooner was the town subdued, than Couthon entered at the head of the authorities of the Convention, and instantly reinstated the Jacobin municipality in full sovereignty, and commissioned them to seek out and denounce the guilty. He wrote to Paris, that the inhabitants consisted of three classes:—1. The guilty rich. 2. The selfish rich. 3. The ignorant workmen, incapable of any wickedness. "The first," he said, "should be guillotined, and their houses destroyed; the fortunes of the second confiscated; and the third removed elsewhere, and their place supplied by a Republican colony."¹ "On the ruins of this infamous city," said Barère in the name of the Committee of Public Salvation, when he announced that Lyons was subdued, "shall be raised a monument to the eternal glory of the Convention; and on it shall be engraved the inscription: *Lyons made war on freedom: Lyons is no more.*" The name of the unfortunate city was suppressed by a decree of the Convention; it was ordered to be termed the "Commune Affranchie." All the inhabitants were appointed to be disarmed, and the whole city destroyed, with the exception only of the poor's-house, the manufactories, the great workshops, the hospitals, and public monuments. A commission of five members was appointed to inflict vengeance on the inhabitants; at their head were Couthon and Collot d'Herbois. The former presided over the destruction of the edifices, the latter, over the annihilation of the inhabitants.²

The means taken by these worthy proconsuls of the Convention to carry their measures into effect, and work the people up to that pitch of sanguinary enthusiasm when they might be the ready instruments of their utmost atrocities, were founded on a perfect knowledge of human

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

83

Town capitulates, and sanguinary measures of the Convention.

Oct. 10.

¹ Jom. iv.
194. •

Oct. 12.

² Jom. iv.
194. Moniteur, Oct.
12.

94.
Means taken to rouse the people.

CHAP.
XIII.

1793.

1 Prudhomme, *Crimes de la Révolution*, vi. 30, 31.

95.
Commencement of the destruction of Lyons.

nature, and were those which, in every age, have been resorted to by the democratic tyrants of mankind. The first thing they did was to re-establish the Jacobin club, formerly presided over by Chalier. The most violent speeches were there immediately made, especially by Javouignes, a popular demagogue, who had succeeded to his influence. Chalier and Riard were represented as the martyrs of liberty, the heroes of the republic, the only friends of the people. The workmen were told of the shameful slavery in which they had so long been kept by the rich; of the fortunes which had been wrung from the sweat of their brows, and the penury which they themselves had received as the reward of their toil. Javouignes invited them to resume their rights, by rending from the rich their ill-gotten gains; and when the decree of the Convention confiscating the property of all the proprietors was promulgated, he had no difficulty in persuading them that the demolition of their houses was the first step in the division of their effects, and essential to the establishment of that sacred equality which was the only secure basis of real freedom.¹

Having worked the people up, by these prospects of plunder, to a sufficient degree of revolutionary energy, the commissioners of the Convention proceeded in a regular and systematic manner to carry its infernal decree into execution.* Attended by a crowd of satellites, all in the most vehement state of excitement, Couthon traversed the finest quarters of the city with a silver hammer; he struck at the door of the devoted houses, exclaiming at the same

• The following is the tenor of this decree:—

“ I.—Tous les habitants de Lyon seront désarmés; leurs armes seront distribués sur le champ aux défenseurs de la République—une partie sera remise aux patriotes de Lyon, qui ont été opprimés par les riches et les contre-révolutionnaires.

“ II.—La ville de Lyon sera détruite. Tout ce qui fut habité par le riche sera démoli. Il ne restera que la maison du pauvre, les habitations des patriotes égorgés ou proscrits, les édifices spécialement employés à l'industrie, et les monuments consacrés à l'humanité et à l'instruction publique.

“ III. Le nom de Lyon sera effacé du tableau des villes de la République. La réunion des maisons conservées portera désormais le nom de Ville Affranchie.

“ IV.—Il sera élevé sur les ruines de Lyon une colonne qui attestera à la postérité les crimes et la punition des Royalistes de cette ville, avec cette inscription—

‘ Lyon fit la guerre à la Liberté—

Lyon n'est plus.

Le 18^{me} jour du premier mois,

L'an deuxième de la République Française.”

—*Moniteur*, Oct. 13, 1793.

time—"Rebellious house, I strike you in the name of the law!" Instantly the agents of destruction, of whom twenty thousand were in the pay of the Convention, surrounded the dwelling, and levelled it with the ground. The expense of these demolitions, which continued, without interruption, for six months, was greater than it cost to raise the princely Hotel of the Invalides: it amounted to the enormous sum of £700,000. The palaces thus destroyed were the finest private buildings in France, three stories in height, adorned with noble columns, and erected in the richest style of the structures of Louis XIV.*

But this vengeance on inanimate stones was but a prelude to more bloody executions. Collot d'Herbois, the next proconsul, was animated with an envenomed feeling towards the inhabitants. Ten years before he had been hissed off their stage, and the vicissitudes of the Revolution had now placed resistless power in the hands of an indifferent provincial comedian; an emblem of the too frequent tendency of civil convulsions to elevate whatever is base, and sink whatever is noble among mankind.† The dis-

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XIII.

1793.

1 Lac. xi.
116, 117.
Abbé Guil-
lon, ii. 392.
Th. v. 317,
318, 356.
Prudhom-
me, vi. 63.

96.

Collot
d'Herbois
and Fouché's
intemperate
proceed-
ings

* Quatre cent mille livres (L.16,000) se dépensent par decade pour les démolitions et quelques autres objets; mais l'indolence des démolisseurs demontre clairement que leurs bras ne sont pas propres à bâtir une République."—ACHARD & GRAVIER; *Lyon*, 28 Nivose, Ann. ii. *Papiers Puédicts trouvés chez ROBERT-PIERRE*, ii. 232

† J. M. Collot d'Herbois had a sallow countenance, a profusion of dark hair and eyebrows; his whole aspect was that of a sanguinary conspirator. He had been a comic actor before the Revolution, and often appeared on the boards of Geneva and Lyons, in the latter of which he had been hissed off the stage. When the Revolution commenced, he quitted that humble vocation and entered the Jacobin Club at Paris, where his savage gestures, thundering voice, and impetuous declamation, almost always excited by the fumes of wine, soon brought him into notice. He first was brought into celebrity, however, by gaining the prize proposed by the Jacobin Club for an essay in 1790, "On the advantages which the people would derive from the new order of things." It was won by his pamphlet entitled—"Almanach du Père Gérard." Subsequently he distinguished himself by the lead which he took in supporting, before the Assembly, the pardon of the mutineers of the regiment of Chateauxvieux, who had been subdued at Nancy by Bouillé, which that body, as might have been supposed, readily granted; and they were immediately received with civic honours and presented to the Assembly, who decreed to them "les honneurs de la séance." Collot d'Herbois, in consequence of the lead which he took on this occasion, was made a member of the new municipality installed in power in Paris on the 10th August, which so rapidly consummated the crimes of the Revolution. He was one of the first who moved in the Assembly for the abolition of royalty, and was made a member of the Committee of Public Salvation. In the deliberations of that body, and subsequently in the Convention, he advocated the total and entire destruction of all suspected persons. "There must be no transportation," said he; "we must destroy all the conspirators; let the places where they are confined be mined; let the torches be fired to blow them into the air: it is thus alone we can get quit of the suspected." He gave such good proof

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1793.

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¹ Prudhomme, vi. 39.
Moniteur, p. 18, Oct. 18.
Guillon, II. 333, 337.
Lac. xi. 117.

carded actor resolved at leisure to gratify a revenge which had been cherished for ten years; innumerable benefits since conferred on him by the people of Lyons, and no small share of their favour, had not been able to extinguish this ancient grudge. This abominable wretch had not a single good quality in his whole character. At once cowardly and cruel, spiteful and relentless, selfish and tyrannical, he united the whole vices of democratic fervour and despotic jealousy, without any of the virtues of either. His character would pass for incredible, if not clearly portrayed by his public acts and private correspondence.* Fouché, (of Nantes,†) afterwards so well known as minister of police under Napoleon, the worthy associate of Collot d'Herbois, published before his arrival a proclamation, in which he declared, "that the French people could acknowledge no other worship but that of universal morality; no other faith but that of its own sovereignty; that all religious emblems placed on the roads, in the houses, or on public places, should be destroyed; that the mortcloth used at funerals should bear, instead of a religious emblem,¹ a

of his disposition to put in practice these maxims on a mission to the Loiret and Oise, where he speedily filled the prisons with victims, that he was immediately fixed on by the Committee of Public Salvation in November 1793, to wreak its vengeance on the unhappy inhabitants of Lyons.—See *Biographie Universelle*, ix. 277, 279.

* "We are accused," said Collot d'Herbois, "of being cannibals, men of blood; but it is in counter-revolutionary petitions, drawn by aristocrats, that the charge is made. A drop of blood poured from generous veins goes to my heart, but I have no pity for conspirators. We caused two hundred to be shot at once, and it is charged upon us as a crime! When twenty persons are guillotined at once, the last dies twenty deaths. They speak of sensibility! The Jacobins are full of sensibility—they have all the virtues! They are compassionate, humane, and generous; but they reserve these sentiments for the patriots."—*Débats des Jacobins*, 20th Dec. 1793.

† Joseph Fouché, afterwards Duke of Otranto, was born at Nantes on the 29th May 1763, and proved one of the most remarkable men whom the Revolution brought forth. He was the son of a captain in the merchant service at Nantes, and received the rudiments of education at the college of that town. His talents, however, were slow in developing themselves, and he passed at school for a boy of no capacity. He never could be got to comprehend the rules of grammar, and rebelled constantly against the attention to words, which unhappily form almost the sole objects, in all countries, of elementary education. While he was deemed by all an incorrigible simpleton, he was secretly devouring works of thought and reflection; and what first attracted the notice of his preceptors was the discovery that he was studying the *Pensées de Pascal*. He was originally destined to the merchant service; but the delicacy of his constitution caused that design to be abandoned, and he went to Paris to complete his education, with a view to a learned profession. The theological works first put into his hands excited no attention in his mind; but he fastened with avidity on the Elements of Euclid, the Essays of Nicolle, and the Petit Carême of Massillon. He underwent a distinguished mathematical examination at

•

figure of Sleep, and that over the door of the cemetery should be written—*Death is an eternal sleep.*" The principles of these worthy successors of Châlier were, that all rebels, conspirators, and traitors, must be annihilated, if possible, at a single blow, and every vestige of the old regime destroyed.*

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Arras, and afterwards at Vendôme; and his contemporaries at that period are unanimous in attesting the regularity of his manners, and the kindness of his disposition. At the college of Arras he formed an intimacy with Robespierre, who was indebted to his friendship for the loan of some hundred francs to enable him to travel to Paris when he was first appointed deputy to the Constituent Assembly. At the age of twenty-five, his talents were so well known that he was appointed *Préfet des Etudes* at the college of Nantes; and he held that situation when the Revolution broke out in 1789.

Instantly he fastened with his whole heart and soul on the Revolutionary doctrines, and, as he had not yet received orders, he married, went to the bar, and soon became a leading member of the popular society at Nantes. Without eloquence, he signalised himself from the first by the unsparing use of that violence and exaggeration, in thought and language, which with the multitude is the surest passport to success. In September 1792, he was elected member of the Convention for the department of Loire Inferieure, and at first he took no decided part in that Assembly: he lay by and watched the course of events. His intimacy with Robespierre was revived, but their characters were too dissimilar to enable them to act long together. Robespierre was a sincere and exalted fanatic, who deemed the sacrifice of hundreds of thousands the necessary prelude to general felicity. Fouché, cool and selfish, was led away by none of these delusions, but from the first set deliberately to work to make his fortune, *per fas aut nefas*, by the Revolution. He attached himself in preference to the party of Danton, the profound and selfish immorality of which was much more in accordance with his views and objects. From the moment of his arrival at Paris, he was a constant attendant at the Jacobin Club, and closely connected with Marat. At first he acted with Vergniaud and the Girondists; but no sooner did the strife begin between them and the Jacobins, than with his usual prophetic acuteness he attached himself to the latter, as the party most likely to prevail in the contest. Still he shunned the extreme violence of their leaders as likely to injure themselves; and on one occasion, when Robespierre had vehemently assailed Vergniaud in the Convention, he said to him, "Such violence will assuredly move the passions; but it will neither induce confidence nor ensure esteem." He warmly supported all the extreme revolutionary measures, as the death of Louis, the sale of the emigrants' estates, and the seizure of the property of hospitals and incorporations. His first public mission of importance was as commissioner of the Convention to Lyons in September 1793, where he signalised himself equally by his atheism, his cruelty, and his rapacity. His remarkable character will come to be drawn with more propriety in a future volume, after his extraordinary career has been recounted.—See *Biographie Universelle*, lxiv. 293, 294. (FOUCHÉ.)

• "Let us be terrible, that we incur not the risk of being feeble. Let us annihilate in our wrath at a single blow, all rebels, all conspirators, all traitors, to spare ourselves the long agony of punishing like kings. Let us exercise justice after the example of nature: let our vengeance be that of the people, let us strike like the thunderbolt, and let even the ashes of our enemies disappear from the soil of liberty. Let the perfidious and ferocious English be attacked from every side. Let the whole Republic form a volcano to pour devouring lava upon them; may the infamous island which produced those monsters who no longer belong to humanity, be for ever buried under the ocean. Adieu! my friend; *Tears of joy flow from my eyes: we send this evening two hundred and thirteen rebels to be shot.*"—FOUCHÉ to COLLOT D'ARNOIS. *Moniteur*, 25th Dec. 1793.

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97.

First proceedings of the Jacobins at Lyons.

Proceeding on these atrocious principles, the first step of Collot d'Herbois and Fouché, was to institute a fête in honour of Châlier, the Republican governor of Lyons, a man of the most execrable character, who had been put to death for innumerable crimes on the first insurrection against the rule of the Convention. The churches were accordingly closed, the priests abolished, the decade established, and every vestige of religion extinguished. The bust of Châlier was then carried through the streets, followed by an immense crowd of assassins and prostitutes, exclaiming—"A bas les aristocrates! Vive la guillotine!" After them came an ass, bearing the gospel, the cross, the communion vases, and all the most sacred emblems of the Christian worship; the procession came to the Place des Terreaux, where an altar was prepared amidst the ruins of that once splendid square. Fouché then exclaimed—"The blood of the wicked can alone appease thy manes! We swear before thy sacred image to avenge thy death; the blood of the aristocrats shall serve for its incense." At the same time a fire was lighted on the altar, and the crucifix and the gospel were committed to the flames; the consecrated bread was trampled under the feet of the mob, and the ass compelled to drink out of the communion cup the consecrated wine. After this, the procession, singing indecent songs, traversed the streets, followed by an ambulatory guillotine.¹

¹ Prudhomme, *Crimes de la Révolution*, vi., 34, 35.
Guillon, ii. 346, 348.
Lac., xi. 118.

98.

Proceedings of the Revolutionary tribunal at Lyons.

The Convention, to expedite the work of destruction, sent a column of the most violent Jacobins from Paris, under the direction of Ronsin and Parrein, the one a starving advocate, and the other a popular orator from the Faubourg St Antoine. They commenced their operations by distributing large sums of money, remitted from Paris for that purpose, among the most violent of the Jacobins.* Under their direction, a Revolutionary tribunal, consisting of seven members, was established, with Parrein for its president. This commission soon gave proofs of its efficiency, by condemning two hundred and nine persons to death. A few

* "J'ai reçu plusieurs fois de tes nouvelles, et notamment la somme de quatorze cents livres en assignats; j'en ferai le plus digne emploi—celui de soutenir avec courage les principes d'une société républicaine. Nous sommes une vingtaine de bons bougres qui avons pris cette résolution, et elle sera constante."—ACHARD À GRAVIER; *Lyons*, 15 Ventose, Ann. ii. *Papiers Inédits trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE*, ii. 235.

questions constituted, in general, the whole trial of the accused:—"What is your name and profession? What did you do during the siege? Are you denounced?" The slightest confusion, a gesture, a blush, a fit of trembling, a sudden paleness at answering these questions, were sufficient, without any witnesses, to send the accused to the guillotine. Yet, even in these terrible moments, the heroism of the persons brought before the tribunal was often such that the judges had no small difficulty in finding a pretext for their condemnation. Mario Adrian, a girl of sixteen, had served a cannon during the siege. "How could you," said the president, "brave the fire and point the gun against the country?" "I did so to defend it," replied the young heroine. She was instantly condemned. Another girl of seventeen was brought before the tribunal because she would not wear the tricolor cockade. "It is not," said she, "that I hate the cockade; but, as you bear it, it would dishonour my forehead." She persisted in her refusal, and was sent to the scaffold. "Do you believe in God?" said they to a priest. "A little," replied he, hoping to soften their fury. "Die, and you will discover," was the answer, and he was condemned on the spot. Two brothers of the name of Bruyset were imprisoned, both of the very highest character. The elder had signed some bills to raise funds during the siege for the defence, and the younger was brought to trial by mistake for his brother. They showed him the bill, and asked him if he knew the signature, and if so, if it was his own. "The signature," said he, "is that of Bruyset!" On this generous answer he was sent to death, instead of his brother, who had really signed the instrument. He died cheerfully, recommending his wife and children to the relative whom he had saved.¹

The vast accumulation of prisoners soon exceeded all the means of confinement which Lyons could afford; and great numbers of the captives were in consequence shut up in two large vaults, formerly used for storing wine, called *La Mauvaise* and *La Bonne Cave*. Those confined in the former were such as were destined for immediate and certain death: in the latter, those who had any chance of escape. This distinction was so well known, that the prisoners sent to the former knew that they had only a

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¹ Prudhomme, vi. 42, 47

99
Mournful
inscriptions
on the walls
of the pri-
sons.

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few hours to live, and its gloomy walls exhibited inscriptions indicating the feelings of despair which filled the breasts of its inmates. In one place, near a small aperture which admitted a ray of light, was written, "In a hundred and thirty minutes I shall have ceased to exist; I shall have tasted of death: blessed be the stroke, it is the mother of repose." Near the door were inscribed these words—"Barbarous judges! you deceived yourselves in sending me to death; the end of my days is the end of my woes; you are my best friends." In another place were found the words—"In a few minutes I shall be in nonentity: I am wearied of the world: oh, for the sleep of death!" Unable to bear the suspense even of a few hours before their last hour approached, numbers attempted to destroy themselves, and some actually succeeded. One had, with a piece of bottle-glass which he found on the floor, opened veins in every part of the body, and he was bleeding from thirty wounds when the Revolutionary Tribunal caused him to be brought out, deadly pale, and weltering in his blood on his mattress, and placed under the guillotine.¹

¹ Prudhomme, *ibid.*, vi. 46, 48, 54.

100.
Dreadful
measures of
the Revolution-
ary Tribunal at
Lyons.

The Revolutionary Tribunal, established under such auspices, was not slow in consummating the work of destruction; but, rapid as they were, they were far from coming up to the expectations and desires of the commissioners of the Convention. Fifteen or twenty persons were daily executed; but that appeared insufficient to the Jacobins.* "Convinced, as we are," said Fouché, "that there is not an innocent soul in the whole city, except such as were loaded with chains by the enemies of the people, we are steeled against every sentiment of mercy; we are resolved that the blood of the patriots shall be revenged in a manner at once prompt and terrible. The decree of the Convention for the destruction of Lyons has been passed, but hardly any thing has been done for its execution. The work of demolition goes on too slowly; more rapid destruction is required by Republican impatience.

* "Le Tribunal Révolutionnaire poursuit avantageusement sa carrière: il aurait certainement besoin de bons renseignements: mais il ne se donne pas la peine de les rechercher ou demander à ceux en qui il peut se confier: néanmoins hier 17 nurent la tête à la guillotine, et aujourd'hui 8 y passent et 21 reçoivent le feu de la foudre."—ACHARD à GRAVIER, *juré du Tribunal Révolutionnaire; Lyon, 28 Nivôse, Ann. ii. Papiers trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE*, n. 231.

The explosion of the mine, or the ravages of fire, can alone express its omnipotence ; its will can admit of no control, like the mandates of tyrants ; it should resemble the lightning of heaven. We must annihilate at once the enemies of the Republic ; that mode of revenging the outraged sovereignty of the people will be infinitely more appalling than the trifling and insufficient work of the guillotine. Often twenty wretches on the same day have undergone punishment, but my impatience is insatiable till all the conspirators have disappeared ; popular vengeance calls for the destruction of our whole enemies at one blow ; we are preparing the thunder." * In pursuance of these principles, orders were given to the Revolutionary Tribunal to redouble its exertions. " We are dying of fatigue," said the judges and the executioner to Collot d'Herbois. " Republicans," replied he, " the amount of your labours is nothing to mine ; burn with the same ardour as I have for your country, and you will soon recover your strength."¹

Deeming the daily execution of fifteen or twenty persons too tardy a display of Republican vengeance, Collot d'Herbois prepared a new and simultaneous mode of punishment. Sixty captives, of both sexes, were led out at once, tightly bound together, to the Place des Brétteaux ; they were arranged in two files, with a deep ditch on each side, which was to be their place of sepulchre, while gendarmes, with uplifted sabres, threatened with instant death whoever moved from the position in which he stood. At the extremity of the file, two cannon loaded with grape were so placed as to enfilade the whole ; but the ferocity of their persecutors was disappointed by the heroism which most of these victims displayed in their last moments. Seated on the fatal chariots, they embraced each other with transports of enthusiasm, exclaiming—†

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1 Guillon, il.
402, 405.
Moniteur,
Nov. 24.
Th. v. 356.

101.
Mitrailade
of the pri-
soners.

* FOCHE au Comité du Salut Public. *Papiers trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE*, ii. 207 : *Moniteur*, 24th Nov. 1793.

† " Tous les jours il en passe, tant fusillés que guillotinés, au moins un cinquantaine."—PELOT au Citoyen GRAVIER ; *Ville Affranchie*, 28 Frimaire, Ann. ii.

" Ma santé se retablit chaque jour par l'effet de la destruction des ennemis de notre commune patrie. Mon ami, je t'assure que cela va on ne peut mieux : tous les jours il s'en expédie une douzaine ; l'on vient même de trouver cet expédient trop long. Tu apprendras sous peu de jours des expéditions de deux ou trois cents à la fois ; les maisons se demolisent à force."—PELOT au GRAVIER ; 13 Frimaire, Ann. ii. *Papiers trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE*, ii. 209.

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" Mourir pour la patrie
Est le sort le plus doux,
Le plus digne d'envie."

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Many women watched for the hour when their husbands were to pass to execution, precipitated themselves upon the chariot, locked them in their arms, and voluntarily suffered death by their side. Daughters surrendered their honour to save their parents' lives; but the monsters who violated them, adding treachery to crime, led them out to behold the execution of the objects for whom they had submitted to sacrifices worse than death itself. The wretched victims beheld with firmness the awful preparations, and continued singing the patriotic hymns of the Lyonnese, till the signal was given, and the guns were discharged. Few were so fortunate as to obtain death at the first fire; the greater part were merely mutilated, and fell uttering piercing cries, and beseeching the soldiers to put a period to their sufferings. Broken limbs, torn off by the shot, were scattered in every direction, while the blood flowed in torrents into the ditches on either side of the line. A second and a third discharge were insufficient to complete the work of destruction, till at length the gendarmerie, unable to witness such protracted sufferings, rushed in and dispatched the survivors with their sabres. The bodies were collected and thrown into the Rhone.¹

¹ Guillon, ii.
417. Lac.
xi. 118, 121.
Proudhon-
ne, vi. 60,
51.

102.
Vast num-
bers who
thus per-
ished.

On the following day, this bloody scene was renewed on a still greater scale. Two hundred and nine captives, drawn from the prison of Roanne, were brought before the Revolutionary judges at the Hotel de Ville, and, after merely interrogating them as to their names and professions, the lieutenant of the gendarmerie read a sentence, condemning them all to be executed together. In vain several exclaimed that they had been mistaken for others, that they were not the persons condemned. With such precipitance was the affair conducted, that two commissaries of the prison were led out along with their captives; their cries, their exclamations were alike disregarded. In passing the bridge Morand, the error was discovered, upon the prisoners being counted: it was intimated to Collot d'Herbois that there were two too many. "What signifies it," said he, "that there are two too many? If they die to-day, they cannot die to-morrow." The whole were brought to the place of execution, a meadow near the granary of Part Dieu, where they were attached to one

cord, made fast to trees at stated intervals, with their hands tied behind their backs, and numerous pickets of soldiers disposed so as by one discharge to destroy them all. At a signal given, the fusillade commenced; but few were killed; the greater part had only a jaw or a limb broken, and, uttering the most piercing cries, broke loose in their agony from the rope, and were cut down by the gendarmerie in endeavouring to escape. The numbers who survived the discharge, rendered the work of destruction a most laborious operation, and several were still breathing on the following day, when their bodies were mingled with quicklime, and cast into a common grave. Collot d'Herbois and Fouché were witnesses of this butchery from a distance, by means of telescopes which they directed to the spot.¹

All the other fusillades, of which there were several, were conducted in the same manner.* One of them was executed under the windows of a hotel on the Quay, where Fouché, with thirty Jacobins and twenty courtesans were engaged at dinner; they rose from table to enjoy the spectacle. Many persons became insane from such an accumulation of horrors, and were executed raving mad. One man of the name of Lawrence-son, who had his pardon in his pocket, was seized with such a sudden fit of insanity that he could make no use of it, and was hurried away to the scaffold in a swoon, when the pardon dropped out of his pocket. He was taken to the Hotel de Ville, where he was restored to animation. "Am I yet alive?" cried he. "Give me back my head: Do you not see that stream of blood? it is over my ankles: I am falling into that gulf of dead bodies: Save me, save me!" The bodies of the slain were floated in such numbers down the Rhone, that the waters were poisoned, and the danger of contagion at length obliged Collot d'Herbois to commit them to the earth. During the course of five months, upwards of six thousand persons suffered death by the hands of the executioners, and more than double that number were driven into exile. Among those who perished on the scaffold, were all the noblest and most virtuous characters of Lyons,

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¹ Prudhomme, vi. 51, 53. Guillon, ii. 427. Lac. xi. 121.

^{103.} Frightful butcheries witnessed by Fouché.

* "La guillotine, la fusillade, ne va pas mal; *soirante, quatre-vingt, deux cents, à la fois*; et tous les jours on a le plus grand soin d'en mettre de suite en état d'arrestation, *pour ne pas laisser de vide aux prisons*."—PELOT au Citoyen GRAVIER, juré national; 24 Frimaire, Ann. ii. *Papiers Inédits trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE*, ii. 211.

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¹ Prudhomme, vi. 56.
Lac. xi. 121,
122. Guillon, ii. 317,
427.

104.
Siege of
Toulon.

² Lac. xi.
121. Abbé
Guillon, ii.
307, 308.
Toul. iv. 81.
Ann. Reg.
xxxiii. 419.

all who were distinguished either for generosity, talent, or accomplishment. The delight which these frightful massacres gave to the Revolutionists could not be credited if not proved by the decisive evidence of their secret correspondence with Robespierre.* The engineer Morand, who had recently constructed the celebrated bridge over the Rhone which bore his name, was among the first to suffer, and he was succeeded by a generous merchant, whose only crime consisted in having declared that he would give 500,000 francs to rebuild the Hotel Dieu, the noblest monument of charity in Lyons.¹

These dreadful atrocities excited no feeling of indignation in the Convention. With disgraceful animosity, they were envious of any city which promised to interfere with the despotism of the Parisian populace, and were secretly rejoiced at an excuse for destroying the wealth, spirit, and intelligence which had sprung up with the commercial prosperity of Lyons. "The arts and commerce," said Hébert, "are the greatest enemies of freedom. Paris should be the centre of political authority, no community should be suffered to exist which can pretend to rival the capital." Barère announced the executions to the Convention in the following words:—"The corpses of the rebellious Lyonese, floated down the Rhone, will teach the perfidious citizens of Toulon the fate which awaits them." The troops engaged in the siege of Lyons were immediately moved towards that unhappy city; twelve battalions of the army of Italy were destined to the same service, and soon forty thousand men were assembled under its walls. It presented, nevertheless, great difficulties to be overcome; the more especially as the English government had sent a body of troops from Gibraltar to co-operate in its defence, and a considerable force of Spaniards, Piedmontese, and Neapolitans, had arrived to aid in defending so important a stronghold from the Republican forces.²

On the land side Toulon is backed by a ridge of lofty hills, on which, for above a century past, fortifications had

* "Encore des têtes, et chaque jour des têtes tombent. Quelles délices tu aurais goûté si tu eusses vu avant-hier cette justice nationale de 209 scélérats! Quelle majesté! Quelle ton imposant! Tout va bien. Combien de grands coquins ont ce jour-là mordu la poussière dans l'arcène des Bréteaux! Quel ciment pour la République!"—ACHARD à GRAYIER; *Lyons*, 17 Frimaire, Ann. ii. *Papiers Inédits trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE*, ii. 233.

been erected. Though formidable to the attacking force, however, these fortified posts were not less dangerous to the besieged, if once they fell into the hands of the enemy, for the greater part of the city and harbour could be reached by their guns. The mountains of Faron and Hauteur de Grasse are the principal points of this rocky range; on their possession depends the maintenance of the place. Shortly after their disembarkation, the English made themselves masters of the defile of Ollioulles, a rocky pass of great strength, well known to travellers for its savage character, which forms the sole communication between the promontory of Toulon and the mainland of France. An English detachment of six hundred men had driven the Republican posts from this important point: but the defence having been unwisely entrusted to a Spanish force, Carteaux assailed it in the beginning of September with above five thousand men, and, after a slight resistance, regained the pass. Its occupation being deemed too great a division of the garrison of the town, already much weakened by the defence of the numerous fortified posts in the vicinity of the harbour, no attempt was made to regain the lost ground, and the Republican videttes were pushed up to the external works of Toulon. As a recompense for this important service, Carteaux was deprived of his command by the Convention, and Dugommier invested with the direction of the besieging force. Every exertion was made by the allied troops and the inhabitants of Toulon, during the respite afforded by the siege of Lyons, to strengthen the defences of the town; but the regular force was too small, and composed of too heterogeneous materials, to inspire any well-grounded confidence in their means of resistance. The English troops did not exceed five thousand men, and little reliance could be placed on the motley crowd of eight thousand Spanish, Piedmontese, and Neapolitan soldiers, who composed the remainder of the garrison. The hopes of the inhabitants were principally rested on powerful reinforcements from England and Austria; but their expectations from both these powers, as usual at that period with all who trusted to British succour, were miserably disappointed.¹ They made the utmost efforts, however, to strengthen the defences of the place, and in particular endeavoured to render

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106.
Description
of Toulon,
and Allies
assembled
for its de-
fence.

Aug. 29.

¹ Personal
observation.
Th. vi. 52
Ann. Reg.
xxxiii. 415.
Toul. iv. 81.

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impregnable the Fort Eguillette, placed at the extremity of the promontory which shuts in the lesser harbour, and which, from its similarity to the position of the great fortress of the same name, they called the Little Gibraltar.

106
Napoleon
obtains the
command of
the artillery.

In the beginning of September Lord Mulgrave arrived and assumed the command of the whole garrison. The most active operations were immediately commenced for strengthening the outworks on the mountain range behind the city. The heights of Malbousquet, of Cape Brun, and of Eguillette, were soon covered with works traced out by the French engineers. No sooner had General Dugommier taken the command, and the whole besieging army assembled, than it was resolved to commence an attack on the hill forts which covered the harbour; and for this purpose, while a false attack was directed against Cape Brun, the principal effort was to be made for the possession of the mountain of Faron, and the Fort Malbousquet. With this view the breaching batteries were placed under the direction of a young officer of artillery, then chief of battalion, destined to surpass all his predecessors in European history, NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE. Under his able superintendence, the works of the fort soon began to be seriously damaged; and, to interrupt the operations, a sally was resolved upon from the garrison.¹

1 Jom. iv.
219, 220.
Ann. Reg.
xxiii. 415.

107.
Progress of
the siege.
First action
of Napoleon.

On the 30th November the sally was made by three thousand men from the town, to destroy the works on the heights of Arrennes, from which this annoyance was experienced; while another column, of nearly the same strength, proceeding in the opposite direction, was destined to force the batteries at the gorge of Ollioulles, and destroy the great park of artillery placed there. Both attacks were at first crowned with complete success. The batteries were carried, and the park on the point of being taken, when Dugommier, after haranguing the troops, led them back to the charge and succeeded in repulsing the assailants. On the side of Arrennes, the sally was equally fortunate—all the enemy's works were carried, and their guns spiked; but the impetuosity of the detachment having led them too far in pursuit of the enemy, they were, in their turn, attacked by fresh troops, headed by NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE, who here commenced his career of victory, and driven back to the city with considerable loss.² In this

2 Ann. Reg.
414. Jom.
iv. 220.
Toul. iv. 85.
Th. vi. 55.
56. Nap. i.
13, 15.

affair General O'Hara, who had recently arrived from England, was wounded, and Dugommier was twice struck by spent balls, though without experiencing any serious injury.

The whole force of the besiegers was now directed against the English redoubt, erected in the centre of the works on the neck of land called Eguillette, and regarded as the key of the defence on that quarter. After battering the forts for a considerable time, the fire of the besiegers became quite incessant during the whole of the 16th of December; and at two o'clock on the morning of the 17th, the Republicans advanced to the assault. They were received with a tremendous fire of grape and musketry from the works, and soon the ditch was filled with the dead and the dying. The column was driven back, and Dugommier, who headed it, gave all over for lost; but fresh troops continually advancing with great intrepidity, at length overpowered the Spanish soldiers, to whom a part of the line was intrusted, and surrounded the British detachment, nearly three hundred of whom fell while gallantly defending their part of the intrenchments. The possession of this fort by the enemy rendered the further maintenance of the exterior defences impracticable; and in the night the whole allied troops were withdrawn from the promontory to the city of Toulon. Napoleon had strongly recommended this measure, as the possession of this fort, which commanded the inner harbour, would render the situation of the fleet extremely perilous, and in all probability lead to the evacuation of the city. While this important success was gained on the side of Fort Eguillette, the Republicans were not less fortunate on the other extremity of the line. A little before daybreak, and shortly after the firing had ceased on the promontory, a general attack was made by the enemy on the whole extensive range of posts which crowned the mountain of Faron. On the eastern side the Republicans were repulsed; but on the north, where the mountain was nearly eighteen hundred feet in height, steep, rocky, and apparently inaccessible, they succeeded in making good their ascent through paths deemed impracticable. Hardly were the Allies beginning to congratulate themselves on the defeat of what they deemed the main attack,¹ when they beheld

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109.

Capture of
Fort Eguil-
lette and the
exterior
forts.

Dec. 17.

¹ Jom. iv.
223. Toul.
iv. 67, 68.
Ann. Reg.
415. Th. vi.
54, 57. Nap.
i. 14, 22, 23.

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109.
Evacuation
of the place.

the heights above them crowded with glittering battalions, and the tricolor flag displayed from the loftiest summit of the mountain.

These conquests, which were projected by the genius of Napoleon, were decisive of the fate of the place. The garrison, it is true, still consisted of above ten thousand men, and the works of the town itself were as yet uninjured; but the harbour was untenable, as the shot from the heights of Faron and Fort Eguillette ranged over its whole extent. Sir Samuel Hood, alone, warmly insisted upon the propriety of an immediate effort to regain the outworks which had been lost; his advice was overruled by all the other officers, and it was resolved to evacuate the place. Measures were immediately taken to carry this determination into effect. The exterior forts, which still remained in the hands of the Allies, were all abandoned, and information conveyed to the principal inhabitants, that the means of retreat would be afforded them on board the British squadron, while the fleet was moved to the outer roads beyond the reach of the enemy's fire. But much confusion necessarily ensued with a garrison composed of so many different nations, and the Neapolitans, in particular, fled from their posts, and got on board their ships with so much precipitation, that they incurred the derision of the whole garrison.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
xxxiii. p.
416, 417.
Jom. iv. 224.
Th. vi. 57.
Toul. iv. 88.
James, i.
110, 115.
Nap. i. 14.

110.
Despair of
the inhabi-
tants.

But very different were the feelings with which the unfortunate inhabitants regarded this hasty evacuation of their city. To them it was the harbinger of confiscation, exile, and death,—Republican conquest, and the reign of the guillotine. With anxious eyes they watched the embarkation of the British sick and wounded on the morning of the 18th; and when the fatal truth could no longer be concealed that they were about to be abandoned, despair and anguish wrung every heart. The streets were soon in the most frightful state of confusion; in many, the Jacobins, and galley-slaves who had broken loose, were already firing on the flying groups of women and children who were hurrying to the quay; and the sides of the harbour were soon filled with a piteous crowd, entreating, in the name of every thing that was sacred, to be saved from their implacable enemies.² No time was lost in taking the unfortunate fugitives on board the vessels appointed for that

² Ann. Reg.
xxxiii. p.
416, 418.
James's
Naval Hist.
i. 115.
Th. vi. 59.

purpose; an operation of no small labour and difficulty, for their numbers exceeded fourteen thousand.

It was resolved in the council, that such part of the French fleet as could be got ready for sea, should be sent out under the Royalist Admiral Trogoffe, and that the remainder, with all the stores, should be destroyed. This was a service of great danger, for the Republicans were fast pressing on the retreating forces of the besieged, and their shot already began to plunge into the harbour. Sir SIDNEY SMITH,* who here too first appeared in arms against Napoleon, whose destiny he was hereafter so materially to affect, volunteered to conduct the perilous enterprise, and at midnight proceeded to the arsenal to commence the work of destruction. He found the galley-slaves, to the number of six hundred, the greater part of whom were unfettered, inclined to dispute his entrance into the dock-yard, but by disposing a British sloop so that its guns enfiladed the quay, he was able to overawe them, and at the same time restrain the Jacobins, who, in great numbers, and with loud shouts, were assembling round its outer palisades. At eight, a fireship was towed into the harbour; at ten the torches were applied, and the flames arose in every quarter. Notwithstanding the calmness of the night, the fire spread with rapidity, and soon reached the fleet, where, in a short time, fifteen ships of the line, and eight frigates, were consumed or burnt to the water's edge. The volumes of smoke which filled the sky, the flames which burst, as it were, out of the sea, and ascended to the heavens, the red light which illuminated even the most distant mountains, formed, says Napoleon, a sublime and unique spectacle.¹ About midnight, the Iris frigate, with several thousand barrels of powder, blew up with a terrific explosion, and shortly after the Montreal, fireship, experienced the same fate. The burning embers falling in every direction, and the awful violence of the shocks, quelled for a moment the shouts of the Republican soldiers, who now crowded to the harbour's edge, and beheld, with indignant fury, the resistless progress of the conflagration.²

No words can do justice to the horrors of the scene which ensued, when the last columns of the allied troops commenced their embarkation. Cries, screams, and lamenta-

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111.
Burning of
the arsenal
and fleet.

¹ Nap. i. 25.

² Ann. Reg.
xxxiii. 418.
Jom. iv. 226.
James, i.
117. Th.
vi. 58, 59.
Nap. i. 25,
26.

* See a biography of Sir SIDNEY SMITH, *infra*, c. xxvi. § 82.

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1793.

§2.

Horror of
the evacua-
tion.

tions, arose in every quarter ; the frantic clamour, heard even across the harbour, announced to the soldiers in the Republican camp that the last hope of the Royalists was giving way. The sad remnant of those who had favoured the royal cause, and who had neglected to go off in the first embarkation, came flying to the beach, and invoked, with tears and prayers, the aid of their British friends. Mothers, clasping their babes to their bosoms, helpless children and decrepid old men, might be seen stretching their hands towards the harbour, shuddering at every sound behind them, and even rushing into the waves to escape the less merciful death which awaited them from their countrymen. Vast numbers perished from falling into the sea, or the swamping of boats, into which multitudes crowded loaded with their most valuable effects, or bearing their parents or children on their shoulders. Such as could seize upon boats rushed into them with frantic vehemence, pushed from the beach without oars, and directed their unsteady and dangerous course towards their former protectors. Sir Sidney Smith, with a degree of humanity worthy of his high character, instantly suspended his retreat till not a single individual who claimed his assistance remained on the strand, though the total number borne away amounted to fourteen thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven.¹

The lukewarmness or timidity of the Spanish officers, to whom the destruction of the vessels in the basin before the town had been entrusted, preserved them from destruction, and saved a remnant, consisting of seven ships of the line and eleven frigates, to the Republic. These, with five ships of the line, sent round to Rochefort at the commencement of the siege, were all that remained of thirty-one ships of the line, and twenty-five frigates, which were lying in Toulon at the time it fell into the hands of the Allies. Three ships of the line, and three frigates, were brought away untouched, and taken into the English service ; the total number captured or destroyed, was eighteen ships of the line, nine frigates, and eleven corvettes. The French soldiers beheld with indescribable anguish the destruction of their fleet ; all thinking men then foresaw that the war lighted up between the rival states, could not be extinguished but, by the destruction of one of them.²

¹ Joubert's
Memoirs, p.
75. Ann.
Reg. 418.
Fonville,
84, 112.
² Jom.
me, vi. 149,
161.

113.
Total loss
in ships to
the French.

² Jom. iv.
225, 226.
James, i.
117. Th.
vi. 60. Ann.
Reg. xxxiii.
420.

The storm which now burst on the heads of the unfortunate Toulonese, was truly dreadful. The infuriated soldiers rushed into the town, and, in their rage, massacred two hundred Jacobins, who had come out to welcome their approach. For twenty-four hours the town was given up to pillage, and the wretched inhabitants were a prey to the brutality of the soldiers, and of the galley-slaves, who were let loose upon the city. A stop was only put to these horrors by the citizens redeeming themselves for the enormous sum of 4,000,000 francs, or £176,000. To the honour of Dugommier, it must be added that he did his utmost, both to check the violence of his soldiers, and mitigate the severity of the Convention towards the captives; but he could not arrest the cruelty of the government commissioners. A vast multitude of several thousand citizens, of every age and sex, perished in a few weeks, by the sword or the guillotine; two hundred were daily beheaded for a considerable time; and twelve thousand labourers were hired from the surrounding departments, to demolish the buildings of the city.^{1*}

But even the unspeakable anguish thus occasioned could not soften the hearts of the inexorable Convention. On the motion of Barère, it was decreed that the name of Toulon should be changed to that of Port de la Montagne, that the houses should be razed to the foundations, and nothing left but the naval and military establishments. Barras, Fréron, and Robespierre the younger, were chosen to execute the vengeance of the Revolution on the fallen city. Military commissions were immediately formed, the prisons filled, a Revolutionary Tribunal established, and the guillotine put in permanent activity. The inhuman mitrallades of Lyons were imitated with fearful effect; before many days had expired, eight hundred persons had been thus cut off; a prodigious proportion out of a population not now exceeding ten thousand souls. One of the victims was an old merchant of the name of Hughes, eighty-four years of age, deaf, and almost blind. His only crime was the possession of a fortune of £800,000. He offered all his wealth but 500,000 livres to save his

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1A.

Dreadful
cruelty of
the Repub-
licans.

¹ Jom. iv.
226. Ann.
Reg. xxxiii.
421. James,
i. 116, 117.
Prudhom-
me, Crimes
de la Rev.
vi. 146, 149.

Atrocious
deceit of the
Convention
against
Toulon.

* "Tout va bien; j'ai requis douze mille maçons, pour démolir et raser la ville: tous les jours je fais tomber deux cents têtes: et déjà huit cents Toulonnais ont été fusillés."—FRÉRON au Comité de Salut Public. Decem-ber 24, 1793.—PRUDHOMME, vi. 118.

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¹ *Lancaster Cases*,
L. 166.

life ; the judge, deeming that offer inadequate, sent him to the scaffold, and confiscated the whole. " When I beheld this old man executed," said Napoleon, " I felt as if the end of the world was at hand."¹ Among those struck down in one of the fusillades was a grey-haired man, severely, but not mortally wounded. The executioners conceiving him dead, retired from the scene of carnage ; the persons who succeeded them to strip the dead, passed him by, through accident, in the darkness of the night, and he had strength enough left to raise himself from the ground, and move from the spot. His foot struck against a body, which gave a groan, and, stooping down, he discovered that it was his own son ! After the first transports of joy were over, they crept along the ground, and, favoured by the darkness of the night and the inebriety of the guards, had the good fortune to escape, and lived to recount a tale which would have passed for fiction, if experience had not proved, in innumerable instances, that the horrors and vicissitudes of a revolution exceed any thing which the imagination of romance can conceive.¹

* Prudhomme, vi. 157.
Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 421.
Lac. xi. 189.

116.
Promiscuous massacre in the
Champs de Mars.

Regarding these fusillades as too slow a method of gratifying their vengeance, Fréron and the Commissioners of the Convention issued a general order that all who had taken part in the Rebellion, or accepted office under Louis XVIII., should repair to the Champs de Mars under pain of death. Deeming prompt obedience the only chance of escaping the denounced penalty, eight thousand persons assembled at the hour appointed in that place. Fréron, Salicetti, Robespierre the younger, and Barras, were there, supported by a large body of troops and a formidable array of artillery ; but they were startled at the magnitude of the crowd, and, after a short consultation, delegated the work of destruction to three hundred Jacobin prisoners who had been confined, during the siege, on board the Themistocle. These infuriate partisans were instantly let loose on the crowd, and seized on their victims as chance, hatred, or caprice might decide. The persons selected were ranged along a wall opposite to the guns. Among them was an old man of seventy-six, who protested he was too feeble to have aided the besieged—" March on," was the answer, and soon a frightful discharge

of grape-shot mowed down the greater part of the crowd. A voice then exclaimed—"Let all those who are not dead raise themselves up." No sooner did a few do so, than a second discharge cut them off also. This frightful scene was continued or renewed till two thousand persons had perished. Among them were great numbers of country people who had come into Toulon intending to celebrate a fête that had been proclaimed in honour of the Republic, and who had followed the crowd to the Champs de Mars in the belief that it was the place of public festivity. Three persons only escaped from this hideous carnage: an old man, a marine officer, and a youth, whose strength of constitution enabled him to crawl away in the night from a multitude of slain, so great as to render all attempts at burial impossible for some days. Meanwhile Fréron continued his labours: the fusillades were several times repeated; and he boasted, in his letters to the Committee of Public Safety, that he would continue them till, between the flames and the sword, Toulon and its inhabitants had entirely disappeared! Between the fusillades and the guillotine, and the women and children who fell into the sea in trying to escape to the English ships, the number who perished during and after the siege, amounted to fourteen thousand three hundred and twenty-five.^{1*}

Thus terminated this memorable campaign, the most remarkable in the annals of France, perhaps in the history of the world. From a state of unexampled peril, from the attack of forces which would have crushed Louis XIV. in the plenitude of his power, from civil dissensions which threatened to dismember the state, the Republic emerged triumphant. A revolt apparently destined to sever the opulent cities of the south from its dominions; a civil war which consumed the vitals of the western provinces; an invasion which had broken through the iron barrier of the northern, and shaken the strength of the eastern

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¹ Prudhomme, vi. 155, 161.

117.
General reflections on the campaign.

* "Les fusillades sont ici à l'ordre du jour; en voilà 600 qui ne portent plus les armes contre la République. La mortalité est parmi les sujets de Louis XVIII. Sans la crainte de faire périr d'innocents victimes, telles que les femmes infirmes, et les patriotes détenus, tout aurait passé au fil de l'épée; comme sans crainte d'incendier l'arsenal, et les magasins du port échappé à la rage des Anglais, toute la ville eût été livrée aux flammes. Mais elle ne disparaîtra moins du sol de la liberté—cette cité pourrie de Royalisme. Demain, et jours suivants, nous allons procéder au rasement: fusillades jusqu'à ce qu'il n'y ait plus de traîtres."—FRÉRON au Comité de Salut Public. December 26, 1793.—PRUDHOMME, *Crimes de la Révolution*, vi. 160, 161.

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118.
Immense
talent de-
veloped in
France by
the Revo-
lution.

frontier, were all defeated. The discomfited English had retired from Toulon ; the Prussians in confusion had recrossed the Rhine ; the tide of conquest was rolled back in the north ; and the valour of the Vendéans irretrievably arrested. For these immense advantages, the Convention were indebted to the energy of its measures, the ability of its councils, and the enthusiasm of its subjects. In the convulsion of society, not only wickedness, but talent, had risen to the head of affairs ; if history has nothing to show comparable to the crimes which were committed, it has few similar instances of undaunted resolution to commemorate. Impartial justice requires that this praise should be bestowed upon the Committee of Public Salvation ; if the cruelty of its internal administration exceeded the worst despotism of the emperors, the dignity of its external conduct rivalled the noblest instances of Roman heroism.

In talent, it was evident that the Republicans had, before the close of the campaign, acquired a decided preponderance over their opponents. This was the natural consequence of the concentration of all the ability of France in the military service, and the opening which was afforded to merit in every rank to aspire to the highest situations. Drawn from the fertile mines of the middle classes, the talent which now emerged in every department, from the general to the sentinel, formed the basis of a more energetic and intelligent army than had ever appeared in modern Europe ; while the inexhaustible supplies of men which the conscription afforded, raised it to a numerical amount beyond any thing hitherto known in the world. After having authorised a levy of three hundred thousand men in spring, the Convention, in the beginning of August, ordered a conscription of twelve hundred thousand more. These immense armaments, which, in ordinary times, could never have been attempted by a regular government, were successively brought into the field during the fervour of a revolution, through the exaltation of spirit which it had produced, and the universal misery which it had engendered. The destruction of commerce, and the closing of all pacific employment, augmented those formidable bands, which issued as from a fiery volcano to devastate the surrounding states ; and from the annihilation of all the known sources of

credit the government derived, in the general confiscation of property, unparalleled resources.

As this was a new element, then for the first time introduced into political contests, so all the established governments of Europe were mistaken as to the means of resisting it. They were not aware of the magnitude of the power which was thus roused into action, and hoped to crush it by the same moderate efforts which had been found successful in former wars. While France, accordingly, strained every nerve to recruit its armies, they contented themselves with maintaining their contingents at their former moderate amount; and were astonished when the armies calculated to match two hundred thousand soldiers, failed in subduing a million. Hence the rapid series of successes, which in every quarter, before the end of the year, signalised the Republican arms; and the explanation of the fact, that the allied forces, which, in the commencement, were every where superior, before the close of the campaign, were on all sides inferior to their opponents. Never was a more memorable year; the events which occurred during its continuance are pregnant with the most important instruction, both to the soldier and the statesman.

1. The first reflection which suggests itself, is the remarkable state of debility of the French Republic at an early period of its history, and the facility with which, to all appearance, its forces would have yielded to a vigorous and concentrated attack from the allied arms. Her armies, during the first three months of the campaign, were defeated in every encounter; a single battle, in which the Republican loss did not exceed four thousand men, occasioned the loss of all Flanders; the frontiers of France itself were invaded with impunity, and the iron barrier broken through, to an extent never accomplished by Marlborough and Eugene, after successive campaigns at the head of one hundred thousand men. Her army on the Flemish frontier was at length reduced to thirty thousand combatants, and they were in such a state of disorganisation, that they could not by any exertions be brought to face the enemy. "The Convention," says Dumourier, "had no other resource but the army escaped from the camp of Famars to that of Cœsar. Hence the

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120.
The democratic element hitherto unknown in modern war.

120.
Ease with which France might have been conquered at first.

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¹ Dum. iv. 4.
Hard. ii. 289.

Duke of York been detached by Cobourg against the camp of Caesar, with half his forces, the siege of Valenciennes might have been continued with the other half, and the fate of France sealed in that position." In the darkest days of Louis XIV., France was never placed in such peril as after the capture of Valenciennes.¹

121.
Impossibility of a State without a powerful army resisting an invasion.

2. These considerations are calculated to dispel the popular illusions as to the capability of an enthusiastic population alone, to withstand the attacks of a powerful regular army. Notwithstanding the ardour excited by the successful result of the campaign in 1792, and the conquest of Flanders, the Republican levies were, in the beginning of the following campaign, in such a state of disorganisation and weakness, that they were unable to make head against the Austrians in any encounter, and at length remained shut up in intrenched camps, from obvious and admitted inability to keep the field. The enemy by whom they were attacked, was by no means formidable, either from activity or conduct, and yet was uniformly successful. What would have been the result, had the Allies been conducted with vigour and ability; led by a Blücher, a Paskewitch, or a Wellington? By the admission of the Republicans themselves, their forces would have been subdued; the storming of the camp of Caesar would have decided the fate of Europe.²

² Dum. iv.
4. Jom. iii.
68.

122.
Fatal effects of the conversion of the war into one of conquest.

3. Every thing conspires to indicate the ruinous effects which followed the resolution taken at the Congress at Antwerp to convert the war, heretofore undertaken for the overthrow of the Jacobins, into one of aggression and conquest of France itself. The great objects of the Alliance should have been to have separated the cause of that fearful faction from that of the country, and joined in willing bands, to the standards of the Allies, the heroes of La Vendée and the generous citizens of Lyons. By that resolution they separated them for ever, and at length brought all the subjects of the Republic to range themselves cordially and sincerely round the tricolor flag. The subsequent disasters of the war, the divisions which paralysed the combined powers, the unanimity which strengthened the French, may in a great degree be traced to that unhappy deviation from its original principle. And it is remarkable that victory never again was permanently chained to

their standards, till, taught by misfortune, they renounced this selfish policy, and recurred in the great coalition of 1813, to the generous system which had been renounced at Antwerp twenty years before.

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4. The important breathing truce which the time occupied in the siege of Valenciennes and Condé afforded to the French, and the immense advantage which they derived from the new levies which they received, and fresh organisation which they acquired during that period, is a signal proof of the vital importance of fortresses in contributing to national defence. Napoleon has not hesitated to ascribe to the three months thus gained the salvation of France.¹ It is to be constantly recollected that the Republican armies were then totally unable to keep the field; that behind the frontier fortresses there was neither a defensive position, nor a corps to reinforce them; and that, if driven from their vicinity, the capital was taken, and the war concluded. The successful issue of the invasions of 1814 and 1815, affords no argument against these principles: from Napoleon's heedlessness or disasters, the frontier fortresses were then in great part unarmed and unprovided, and were in consequence passed with impunity; or, on being passed, left to the observation of comparatively small bodies of the German landwehr. The case of a million of disciplined men, under consummate leaders, assailing a single state, is not the rule but the exception.

123.
Vast importance of the frontier fortresses.

¹ Nap. in *Las Cases*, ii. 327.

5. The failure of the Allies to take advantage of the debilitated state of their adversaries, is the strongest proof of the erroneous system on which the war was then conducted, and the peculiar ignorance which prevailed as to the mode of combating a revolutionary power. To divide a great army into an extensive chain of posts, and thereby lose all the benefit arising from superiority of force, is generally the weakest mode of conducting hostilities; but to do so with antagonists in a state of revolution, is of all things the most absurd. Passion is then predominant with the multitude; and how readily is one passion transformed into another—the fervour of ambition into the agony of fear! By protracting the contest, and conducting the operations on a slow and methodical plan,

124.
Great errors committed by the Allies.

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c

time is given for the completion of the revolutionary armaments, and the consternation spread among the people by a succession of disasters, is allowed to subside. Repeatedly during the early stages of the war, advantages were gained by the Allies, which, if followed up with tolerable vigour, would have become decisive; and as often did subsequent inactivity or caution render them abortive. New and especially republican levies, easily elated and rendered formidable by victory, are as rapidly depressed by defeat: it is the quality of regular soldiers alone to preserve their firmness in periods of disaster, and present, even after adverse, the intrepidity which recalls prosperous fortune. The system of attack should be suited to the character of the force by which it is opposed; the methodical campaign, indispensable in presence of veteran troops, is the worst that can be adopted with the ardent but unsteady levies which are brought forward by a Revolutionary State.

125.
Ruinous
effect of
the English
reduction
of force

6. The military establishment of 1792, is the never-ceasing theme of eulogium with the economical British politicians of the present day, and incessant are their efforts to have the forces of the British Empire again reduced to that diminutive standard. The result of the first period of the campaign of 1793, may demonstrate how short-sighted, even in a pecuniary point of view, are such niggardly projects. Had Great Britain, instead of twenty thousand, been able to have sent sixty thousand English soldiers to the Continent at that period, what results might have been anticipated from their exertions! Forty thousand native English broke the military strength of Napoleon at Waterloo; and what was the military power of France at the commencement of the war, compared to what was there wielded by that dreaded commander? What would have been gained to Britain had the successes of 1815 come in 1793; the camp of Cæsar been the field of Waterloo! How many hundreds of thousands required to be sacrificed, how many hundreds of millions expended, before the vantage ground then held was regained! So true it is, that a nation can never with safety, even to its finances, reduce too low its warlike establishment; that too severe an economy at one time begets too lavish a prodigality at

another ; and that years of tarnished reputation, and wasteful extravagance, are required to blot out the effects of a single undue pacific reduction.

Bitterly did England experience, in this campaign, the baneful consequences of the imprudent reduction of military force which had followed the close of the American war. With an army at first not exceeding thirty thousand disposable men, what could be achieved against France in the energy of a Revolution ? Yet what fair opportunities, never again to recur, were then afforded to crush the hydra in its cradle ! If thirty thousand British troops had been added to the Duke of York's army at the siege of Dunkirk, that important fortress would speedily have fallen, and the advance of the allied army palsied all the efforts of the Convention ; if the same force had aided the insurgents of La Vendée, the white flag would have been advanced to the Tuileries ; if it had been sent to Toulon, the constitutional throne would have been at once established in all the south of France. The affairs of Napoleon in the spring of 1814, were not so hopeless as those of the Republic would have been, if such an addition could have been made at that critical moment to the British invading force.

This ruinous system of reducing the forces of the country upon the conclusion of hostilities, is the cause of almost all the discomfitures which tarnish the reputation, and of more than half the debt which now curbs the energies, of Britain. The cause, incident to a free constitution, has been well explained by Dean Tucker. "The patriot and furious anti-courtier always begins with schemes of frugality, and is a zealous supporter of measures of economy. He loudly exclaims against even a small parliamentary army; both on account of its danger and expense. By persevering in these laudable endeavours, he prevents such a number of forces by land and sea from being kept up as are necessary for the common safety of the kingdom. The consequence is, when a war breaks out, new levies are half-formed and half-disciplined, squadrons at sea are half-manned, and the officers mere novices in their business. Ignorance, unskilfulness, and confusion, are unavoidable for a time ; the necessary result of which is some defeat received, some stain or dishonour cast upon the arms of

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126.

As exemplified in this campaign.

127.

Cause to which it is owing.
The passion for reduction among the people.

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¹ Tucker's
Essays, i. 72.

Britain. Thus the nation is involved in expenses ten times as great; and made to raise forces twenty times as numerous as were complained of before; till peace is made, and schemes of ruinous economy are again called for by a new set of patriots. Thus the patriotic farce goes round, ending in real tragedy to the nation and mankind."¹ It seems hopeless to expect that this popular cry for costly economy will ever cease in pacific periods, because, even with the recent proof of its ruinous effect at the commencement of the Revolutionary war, we have seen it so fiercely raised for the reduction of the noble force which brought it to a glorious termination. It seems the melancholy fate of each successive generation to be instructed by its own and never by its predecessors' errors; and perhaps it is a law of nature, that such causes should, at stated periods, prostrate the strength of free states, and prevent that progressive growth of their power, which might otherwise sink the emulation of independent kingdoms in the slumber of universal dominion.

128.
The selfish
grasping at
office by the
aristocracy.

But although this blind popular passion for pacific reduction may be the principal cause of the serious disasters which, for the last century and a half of English history, have attended the first years of hostilities, yet it is not the only one; and it is in vain for any one class of society to throw upon another the whole responsibility for a fault which is, in a great degree, common to all. The aristocracy have also, in every period, been deeply implicated in the causes which, unhappily, so often impair the efficiency of our naval and military establishments. Incessant are the efforts which all the holders of parliamentary influence make, during the tranquillity of peace, to get their connexions and dependents elevated to situations which they are frequently incompetent to fill. During the dangers and excitement of war, governments are both compelled by necessity to select the most worthy to discharge momentous and perilous duties, and enabled by the magnitude of their patronage to do so without alienating their parliamentary supporters. But under the limited establishments, and with the comparatively unimportant duties of peace, this is impossible. Reductions on all sides then compel a rigid attention to influence in the disposal of situations, while the slumber

of pacific life affords a prospect of the incapacity of the persons promoted not being discovered, or not becoming productive of public disaster. During the latter years of a long peace, influential imbecility is daily, in the army and navy, mounting more exclusively to the head of affairs; and when hostilities break out, a large proportion of the officers in high command are generally found to be wholly unfit for the duties devolving on them. Thus, while democratic clamour starves down the establishment to a ruinously low standard in point of amount, aristocratic cupidity paralyses the direction, and nullifies the exertions of that part which is allowed to exist. The disasters at the commencement of the war of 1739, during the first three years of that of 1756, during the whole of the American contest, during the first four years of the Revolutionary contest, and in the dreadful campaign of Affghanistaun in 1840, may all be traced to the combined operation of these causes.

Nor is the English system of education and government without an important, and what often proves a disastrous influence on the national fortunes in the commencement, and sometimes through the whole course, of hostilities. No provision is made, in schools or colleges, in general instruction, either for teaching our future statesmen any thing connected with their department in the direction of war, or qualifying our future generals to understand the principles or practice of their profession. Young men too often enter the houses of Lords and Commons perfectly initiated in the lore of Dido and Æneas, of Mars and Venus; able to construct Apollonius and write hexameter verses; perhaps skilled in forensic debate and happy in parliamentary allusions, but as ignorant of the means by which success is to be attained, or disaster averted in war, as the child unborn. Youths are moved from school into the army, able indeed to ride and shoot, and they are soon taught the simple details of military discipline; but for any thing like military study or knowledge, you must, in general, ascend to the higher officers in the service, to whom they have been taught by experience. Statesmen are raised to the supreme direction of affairs often from talent in speaking, or readiness in reply, rather than any practical knowledge they possess, either of the civil or

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1783.

129.

Defects of
English edu-
cation in the
same re-
spect.

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military duties with the direction of which they are entrusted. Power in debate is the one thing needful; and in that noble art the British statesmen are unrivalled in modern times. But power in debate is not statesmanlike wisdom. It is often acquired by habits little conducive to it; and it differs as much from the able direction of a war or a campaign, as the skill in a tournament of Amadis de Gaul or Palmerin of England, does from the consummate genius of Wellington or Napoleon. Hence the numerous opportunities of bringing the war to a successful termination which were lost in 1793, from want of military talent and combination in the British government. And to those who reflect on these circumstances, and their illustration in the woful mismanagement which that campaign exhibits, even when the mighty genius of Pitt was in the direction of affairs, and on the constant examples of similar ignorance of the first principles of warlike combination in government, which every period of our history has exhibited—it will probably occur as the most decisive proof of the virtue and energy which free institutions develop in a community, when duly regulated by aristocratic power, that, despite such obstacles, the British Empire has unceasingly advanced, and has now attained an eminence unrivalled since the time when the Roman legions, directed by wisdom and led by valour, conquered the world.



CHAPTER XIV.

REIGN OF TERROR; FROM THE FALL OF THE GIRONDISTS TO
THE DEATH OF DANTON.—JUNE 2, 1793—MARCH 31, 1794.

"THE rule of a mob," says Aristotle, "is the worst of tyrannies;"* and so experience has proved it, from the caprice of the Athenian democracy to the proscriptions of the French Revolution. The reason is one which always holds, and must remain unaltered while society remains. In contests for power, a monarch has, in general, to dread only the efforts of a rival for the throne; an aristocracy, the ascendancy of a faction in the nobility; the populace, the vengeance of all the superior classes in the state. Hence, the safety of the first is usually secured by the destruction of a single rival and his immediate adherents; the jealousy of the second extinguished by the proscription or exile of a limited number of families; but the terrors of the last require the destruction of whole ranks in society. They constantly feel that, if they do not destroy the superior classes in the state, they will, in the long run, fall again under their influence, and their leaders in consequence be subjected to punishment. Hence the envenomed and relentless animosity by which they are actuated towards them, which is not experienced in nearly the same degree by the holders of property on the resumption of power, because it is not felt to be necessary for the securing of their authority. Measures dictated by the dread of individuals, become unnecessary when they have perished; those levelled against the

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1.

General
sanguinary
character of
democracy.

* "Τούτων των τυραννίδων τελευταια ἡ δημοκρατια."—ARIST.
De Politica.

CHAP. influence of classes, require to be pursued till the class
XIV. itself is destroyed.

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2.
Cause of this
peculiarity.

It was not a mere thirst for blood which made Marat and Robespierre declare and act upon the principle, that there could be no security for the Republic till two hundred and sixty thousand heads had fallen. Hardly any men are cruel for cruelty's sake; the leaders of the Jacobins were not more so than the reckless and ambitious of any other country would be if exposed to the influence of similar passions. Ambition is the origin of desperate measures, because it renders men sensible only of the dictates of an insatiable passion: terror is the most common source of cruelty. Men esteem the lives of others lightly when their own are at stake. The revolutionary innovations being directed against the whole aristocratic and influential classes, their vengeance was felt to be implacable, and no security could be expected to the democratic leaders, till their whole opponents were destroyed. Thence the incessant, and often ridiculous, dread of a counter revolutionary movement, which was evinced by the democratic party, and which so often impelled them into the most sanguinary measures, when there was in reality no danger to be apprehended.* In the strife of contending classes, the sphere of individual vengeance was fearfully augmented. Not one, but fifty leaders had terrors to allay, rivals to extinguish, hatred to gratify. Amidst the contests for influence, and the dread of revenge, every man sacrificed his individual to his political connexions: private friendship, public character, yielded to the force of personal apprehension, or the vehemence of individual ambition. A forced coalition, between the most dissimilar characters, took place from the pressure of similar danger; friends gave up friends to the vengeance of political

* So true are the words of Metastasio—

———* E in qual funesta entrai
Necessita d'esser malvagio. A quanti
Delitti obliga un solo! E come, oh Dio,
Un estremo mi porta all'altro estremo!
Son crudel, perchè temo, e temo appunto,
Perchè son sì crudel.—Congiunta in guisa
E al mio timor la crudeltà, che l'una
Nell' altro si trasforma, e l'un dell'altra
E cagione ed effetto."

Ciro, Act ii. scene 3.

adversaries; individual security, private revenge, were purchased by the sacrifice of ancient attachment.

France experienced the truth of these principles with unmitigated severity during the later stages of the Revolution. But it was not immediately that the leaders of the victorious faction ventured upon the practical application of their principles. The first feeling with the multitude, on the overthrow of the Girondists, was exultation at the victory they had gained, and unbounded anticipations of felicity from the assumption of power by the most popular and vehement of their demagogues. The most extravagant joy prevailed among the Jacobins at their decisive triumph. "The people," said Robespierre, "have by their conduct confounded all their opponents. Eighty thousand men have been under arms nearly a week, and not one shop has been pillaged, not one drop of blood shed. They have proved by that whether the accusation was well founded, that they wished to profit by the disorders to commit murder and pillage. Their insurrection was spontaneous; the result of an universal moral conviction; and the Mountain, itself feeble and irresolute, showed that it had no hand in producing it. The insurrection was a great moral and popular effort, worthy of the enlightened people among whom it arose. The people of Paris have afforded an example which may well make all the monarchs of the earth tremble, and silence the calumnies they pour forth against us. All we have to do now is to complete our triumph, and destroy the Royalists. We must gain possession of the committees, and spend our nights in framing good laws." Under such plausible colours did the revolutionists veil a movement which destroyed the only remnants of virtue in the democracy, and delivered over France in fetters to the Reign of Terror.

The aspect of the Convention, after this great event, was entirely changed from what it had ever been before. Terror had mastered its resistance; proscription had thinned its ranks. The hall was generally silent. The right, and the majority of the centre, never voted, but seemed, by their withdrawal from any active part, to condemn the whole proceedings of the Jacobins, and await intelligence from the provinces as the signal for action. The debates of the Legislature, as they appear in the

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3.

Formation
of a new
government
by the Jaco-
bins.

1 Journal
des Jaco-
bins, 7th
June 1791,
No. 428.

4.

Mournful
aspect of the
Convention,
and decree
vesting su-
preme
power in a
few.

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Moniteur, suddenly contract into nothing. All the decrees proposed by the ruling party were adopted in silence, without any discussion. By a decree of the Convention, the whole power of government was vested in the hands of the Decemvirs till the conclusion of a general peace. They made no concealment of the despotic nature of the authority with which they were thus invested. "You have nothing now to dread," said St Just, "from the enemies of freedom; all we have to do is to make its friends triumphant, and that must be done at all hazards. In the critical situation of the Republic, it is in vain to re-establish the constitution: it would offer impunity to every attack on liberty, by wanting the force to repress such. You are too far removed from conspiracies to have the means of checking them; the sword of the law must be intrusted to surer hands; it must turn every where, and fall with the rapidity of lightning on all its enemies." In silent dread the Assembly and the people heard the terrible declaration; its justice was universally felt; the insupportable evils of anarchy could only be arrested by the sanguinary arm of despotism.¹

1 Deux
Annis, x.
319, 322.
Mig. ii. 296.
Toul. iv.
298. Th.
v. 7.

5.
New formation
of an
executive
power in the
Committee
of Public
Salvation.

But the necessity of some central executive power was speedily felt, to make head against the innumerable dangers and difficulties, external and internal, in which France was involved. The administration had been in the hands of the Girondists; some central power was indispensably required, on their overthrow, to put a period to the anarchy which threatened the country. The Committee of Public Salvation presented the skeleton of a government already formed. Created some months before, it was at first composed of the neutral party; the victorious Jacobins, after the 31st May, found themselves in possession of its power. Robespierre, St Just, Couthon, Billaud Varennes, and Collot d'Herbois, were successively elected members, and speedily ejected Héroult de Séchelles, and the other partisans of Danton.* To the ruling Jacobins, the different departments of government were assigned;²

2 Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 147.
Mig. ii. 295,
296. Toul.
iv. 98. Th.
v. 94, 95.

* The Committee of Public Salvation was not immediately altered after the 31st May. On 10th July it was changed, and Barère, Jean-Bon St André, Gasparin, Couthon, Thuriot, St Just, Prieur (de la Marne,) Héroult de Séchelles, and R. Lindet were chosen members. On 27th July Robespierre was elected in room of Gasparin; Carnot and Prieur (de la Côte d'Or) were added on the 14th August; and Billaud Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and Garamain, on September 6th.—*Histoire Parlementaire*, xxviii. 147.

St Just was intrusted with the duty of denouncing its enemies; Couthon, with bringing forward its general measures; Billaud Varennes and Collot d'Herbois, with the management of the departments; Carnot was made minister of war; Barère, the panegyrist and orator of the government; Robespierre, general dictator over all.

While the practical administration of affairs was thus lodged with despotic power in the hands of the Committee of Public Salvation, the general superintendence of the police was vested in another Committee, styled of General Safety, subordinate to the former, but still possessed of most formidable authority. Inferior to both in power, and now deprived of much of its political importance by the vast influence of the Committee of Public Salvation, the municipality of Paris began to turn its attention to the internal regulation of the city, and there exercised its power with the most despotic rigour. It took under its cognisance the police of the metropolis, the public subsistence, the markets, the public worship, the theatre, the courtesans, and framed on all these subjects a variety of minute and vexatious regulations, which were speedily adopted over all France. Chaumette, its public accuser, ever sure of the applause of the multitude, especially when he tormented their creditors, exerted in all these particulars the most rigorous authority. Consumed by an incessant desire to subject every thing to new regulations, continually actuated by the wish to invade domestic liberty, this legislator of the market-places and warehouses became daily more vexatious and formidable; while Pache, the mayor, indolent and imperturbable, agreed to every thing which was proposed, and left to Chaumette all the influence of popularity with the rabble.¹

The correspondence which the Jacobins carried on over all France, with the most ardent and factious in the towns and villages, speedily gave them the entire command of the country; and rendered the Committee of Public Salvation at Paris, resting on the support of their central club, altogether irresistible from one end of the Republic to the other. It was the command which that party, as the most violent of the Revolutionists, had every where obtained of the magistracies, which was the secret of this terrible power. The Jacobins of Paris were the

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6.
Committee
of General
Safety, and
Municipality
of Paris.

¹ Séances de
la Com-
mune, July
— Aug.
Moniteur
Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 563,
567. Th. v.
94, 96.

7.
State of the
Provinces.

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¹ Th. iv. 157,
158. Hist.
Parl. xxviii.
162. 167.
Deux Amis,
xi 3, 7.

8.
of Lyons,
Bordeaux,
and Mar-
seilles.

incarnation of the whole civil and military force of the commonwealth; the Committee of Public Salvation was the incarnation of the Jacobins of Paris; and Robespierre was the Avatar who personified the Committee of Public Salvation. The democratic party, in possession of all the municipalities in the departments, in consequence of their being elected by universal suffrage,—armed with the powers of a terrible police, intrusted with the right of making domiciliary visits, of disarming or imprisoning the suspected persons, soon obtained irresistible authority. In vain the armed sections and battalions of the National Guard in some places strove to resist; want of union and organisation paralysed all their efforts. In almost all the provincial towns of France they had courage enough to take up arms, and sometimes endeavoured to withstand the dreadful tyranny of the magistracies; but these bodies, based on the support and election of the multitude, in the end every where prevailed over the whole class of proprietors, and all the peaceable citizens, who in vain invoked the liberty, tranquillity, and security to property, for the preservation of which they were enrolled. This was, generally speaking, the situation of parties over all France, though the strife was more ardent in those situations where the masses were densest, and danger most evidently threatened the revolutionary party.¹

The spirit of faction had been for long, in an especial manner, conspicuous at Lyons. A club of Jacobins was there formed, composed of deputies from all the clubs of note in the south of France, at the head of which was an ardent republican, of Italian origin, named Châlier, a man of the most atrocious character, who was at the same time an officer of the municipality and president of the civil tribunal. The Jacobins had got possession of all the offices in the municipality, except the mayoralty, which was still in the hands of a Girondist of the name of Nevière. The Jacobin Club made use of the utmost efforts to displace him, loudly demanded a Revolutionary Tribunal, and paraded through the streets a guillotine recently sent down from Paris “to strike terror into the traitors and aristocrats.” Châlier was at the head of all these revolutionary movements, and with such success were his efforts attended, that for four days in August 1792, the city of

Lyont was the prey of anarchy and murder, and the whole of the autumn of that year, and spring of 1793, had been passed in the most vehement strife between the two parties. A list of eight hundred persons, who had signed a petition in favour of moderate government, was kept by Chaliér, and they were all doomed to death: the day of the massacre being fixed for 9th May, when also a Revolutionary Tribunal was to be established. On the other hand, the armed sections, who were strongly attached to the principles of the Girondists, vigorously exerted themselves to resist the establishment of a tribunal which was shedding such torrents of blood in the capital. Every thing already announced that desperate strife of which this devoted city so soon became the theatre.¹

In the other towns in the south of France, the Girondists were all-powerful, and the utmost horror at the anarchical party, who had obtained the ascendancy at Paris and in the northern provinces, was already conspicuous. Rennes, Caen, Evreux, Marseilles, Toulouse, Nîmes, Saintes, Grenoble, Bayonne, all shared their sentiments. Almost all the deputies who formed the party of the Gironde came from these towns, and their principles perfectly represented the feelings by which the great majority of the better class of citizens was animated. From the mouth of the Rhone to that of the Garonne, these sentiments were nearly universal, and in some even the municipalities were in the hands of the moderate party. At Bordeaux, these principles were so strong, that they already bordered on Royalist feelings; while the whole country from the Gironde and the entrance of the Loire, by the shores of the ocean to the mouth of the Seine, was openly attached to the ancient institutions of the country, and beheld with undisguised horror the atrocities with which the revolutionary party at Paris had already stained their career.²

Such was the state of public feeling in France, when the Revolution of 31st May, and the fall of the Girondists, took place. That catastrophe put the whole of the southern departments into a flame; the imprisonment of the deputies of the national representatives by the mob of Paris, the open assumption of government by the municipality of that city, excited the most profound indignation.

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¹ Deux
Amis, xi. 92,
99. Thiers,
iv. 161.

9.
State of the
other towns
in the south
and west of
France.

² Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 148.
Th. iv. 160,
163.

10.
General coa-
lition of the
Depart-
ments
against the
Convention.

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May 29.

June 5.

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 147,
149. Th. v.
8, 10, 11.

11.
And com-
mencement
of an insur-
rection.
June 13.

In most of the cities the magistracy had fallen, as already observed, into the hands of the Jacobins, who were supported by the parent Club at Paris and the Executive; while the armed sections were attached to the opposite views. The catastrophe of the Girondists at Paris brought those conflicting powers almost every where into collision. At Evreux, the Jacobin authorities were put under arrest, and an armed force of four thousand men was organised; at Marseilles, the sections rose against the municipality, and violently seized possession of the magistracy; at Lyons, a furious combat took place—the sections took the Hotel de Ville by assault, dispossessed the magistracy, shut up the Jacobin Club, and gained the command of the city. At Bordeaux, the arrest of the Girondists, of whose talents the inhabitants were justly proud, excited the most violent sensation, which was brought to a crisis by the arrival of several of the fugitive deputies, who announced that their illustrious brethren were in fetters, and in hourly expectation of death. Cries of fury were immediately heard in all the streets; a general feeling of indignation and of despair impelled the citizens to their several rallying points. The armed sections were quickly in motion, and the municipal authorities, elected during the first fervour of the Revolution, wrote to the executive council at Paris that they were deprived of all power, and unable to say what events a day might bring forth.¹

On the 13th June the department of Eure gave the signal of insurrection; it was agreed that four thousand men should march upon Paris to liberate the Convention. Great part of Normandy followed the example, and all the departments of Brittany were in arms. The whole valley of the Loire, with the exception of that which was the theatre of the war of La Vendée, proposed to send deputies to Bourges to depose the usurping faction at Paris. At Bordeaux, the sensation was extreme. All the constituted authorities assembled together; erected themselves into a committee styled of Public Salvation; declared that the Convention was no longer free; appointed an armed force, and dispatched couriers into all the neighbouring departments. Marseilles sent forth a thundering petition; the whole mountaineers of the Jura were in a ferment; and the departments of the Rhone, the Garonne, and the

Pyrenees, joined themselves to the vast confederacy. So far did the spirit of revolt proceed, that at Lyons a prosecution was instituted against Chalier and the leaders of the Jacobin Club, whose projects for a repetition of the massacres of September at Paris had now been fully brought to light; and deputies, to concert measures for their common safety, were received from Marseilles, Bordeaux, and Caen. Seventy departments were in a state of insurrection; and fifteen only remained wholly devoted to the faction which had mastered the Convention.¹

Opinions were divided at Paris how to meet so formidable a danger. Barère proposed, in the name of the Committee of Public Salvation, that the revolutionary committees, which had become so formidable throughout France, from their numerous arrests, should be every where annulled; that the primary assemblies should be assembled at Paris to name a commander of the armed force, in lieu of Henriot, who had been denounced by the insurgents; and that thirty deputies should be sent as hostages to the provinces. But the Jacobins were not disposed to any measures of conciliation. Robespierre adjourned the consideration of the report of the committee; and Danton, raising the voice so well known in all the perils of the Revolution, exclaimed—"The Revolution has passed through many crises, and it will survive this as it has done the others. It is in the moments of a great production that political, like physical bodies, seem menaced by an approaching destruction. The thunder rolls, but it is in the midst of its roar that the great work which is to consummate the happiness of twenty-five millions of men will be accomplished. Recollect what happened at the time of the conspiracy of La Fayette. In what state were we then? The patriots proscribed or oppressed: civil war threatening every where. Now we are in the same situation. It is said the insurrection in Paris has occasioned disturbances in the departments! Let us declare in the face of the universe, that Paris glories in the revolt of 31st May, and that without the cannon of that day, the conspirators would have triumphed, and we should have been slaves!" In this spirit the Convention, instead of yielding, adopted the most vigorous measures, and spoke in the most menacing strain. They declared that Paris, in

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¹ Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 148,
151. Deux
Amis, x. 324,
326. Th. v.
13, 14.

12.
Energetic
measures of
the Jacobins
at Paris to
meet the
danger
June 10.

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¹ Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 200,
201. Moni-
teur, June
11.

placing itself in a state of insurrection, had deserved well of the country; that the arrested deputies should forthwith be lodged in prison like ordinary criminals; that a call of the Convention should be made, and all those absent without excuse instantly be expelled, and their place supplied by new representatives; that all attempts at correspondence or coalition among the departmental authorities were illegal, and that those who presided in them should forthwith be sent to Paris; they annulled the resolution of the department of the Eure, ordered all the refractory authorities to be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and sent the most ardent Jacobins into the provinces to enforce submission to the central government.¹

13.
The Girond-
ist combina-
tion is dis-
solved.

These vigorous measures effectually broke this formidable league. The departments, little accustomed to resist the authority of the government at Paris, returned one by one to submission. Hostile preparations were made at Bordeaux, Lyons, Rouen, and Marseilles; but the insurgents, without a leader or central point of union, and destitute of all support from the nobility and natural chiefs of the country, were unable to struggle with the energetic Committee of Public Salvation, wielding at will the army, the Jacobin clubs, and the municipalities. France now felt the fatal consequences of the centralisation of all power in Paris by the Constituent Assembly, of the democratic election of all the provincial authorities by universal suffrage, and of the general desertion of their country by the emigrant noblesse. These causes had utterly prostrated the strength of the provinces, and already every where established in absolute force the despotism of the capital. They continued their preparations, however, and refused to send the proscribed authorities to Paris; but their ardour gradually cooled, and in two months the germ of revolt existed only in vigour at Lyons, Toulon, and Marseilles, where it afterwards brought about the most bloody catastrophes.²

² Th. v. 10,
18, 27, 61, 75.
Deux Amis,
x. 326, 327.
Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 352.

14.
Great effect
of the Fede-
ralism im-
puted to the
Girondists.

The great engine which the Jacobins made use of to inflame the popular passions against their opponents, and counteract the general burst of indignation which followed in the departments the proscription of the Girondists, was the charging them with the project of destroying the unity of the Republic, and establishing, instead of one mighty

states a federal union of small republics. That this project was entertained by many of the Girondists, is certain; nor indeed could they well avoid anxiously wishing for the establishment of such a system, considering the incalculable evils which they saw coming on their country and themselves, by the centralisation of all power in the hands of a violent and sanguinary faction at Paris, and the apparent prosperity and happiness which, under the federal system, the American republics were enjoying. But the Jacobins, by incessantly representing that design as amounting, as in fact it did, to a partition of France, and as rendering it wholly unable to resist the attacks of the European monarchies, succeeded in generally rousing the national spirit against the fallen party, and cooling the ardour of those in the departments who had taken up arms in their defence. On the other hand, the leading principle of the Jacobins, which in a great degree produced their popularity in Paris, was the constant determination they evinced and acted on, to centralise every thing in the capital, and render it all in all over France.* Meanwhile the reaction at Lyons, where, during the first burst of public indignation at the arrest of the Girondists, the federal party had gained an entire ascendancy, became terrible. The Revolutionary Tribunal, established by the Jacobins for the destruction of their enemies, now seized by another party, was worked with fearful efficacy against themselves. Numerous arrests took place; and in July alone, eighty-three persons were ordered to be brought to trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal at Lyons; and though one only of these, Chalier, suffered death, yet it was attended with circumstances of a very shocking kind. Though his crimes richly deserved that punishment, yet was his execution peculiarly horrible. Four times the guillotine (as yet a novel instrument in that region) missed its blow, and his head was at length severed from his body by means of a knife.¹

The Convention shortly after, now wholly under the power of the Jacobins, proceeded to the formation of a constitution, the most democratic that ever existed upon

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¹ Journ. de Lyons, No. 100, and 109. Hist. Parl. xxiv. 388; and xxviii. 353, 354. Deux Amis, x. 327, 329.

* "Développer l'idée que Paris n'est que le Quartier général de la République, le centre du gouvernement, une armée sans cesse existante; qu'elle n'existe, qu'elle ne vit, que par les révenus qu'elle fait dans les départements." — Notes de PAVAN, agent de ROBESPIERRE. Papiers Inédits trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE, il. 388

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15.

Formation
of a new
Constitu-
tion.
June 10.

earth. Eight days completed the work. Every Frenchman of twenty-one years of age was entitled to exercise the rights of a citizen ; a deputy was named by every fifty thousand citizens. On the 1st of May of every year, the primary assemblies were to meet, without any convocation, to renew the deputies. It was adopted without discussion, and instantly circulated over all France. "The most democratic constitution that ever existed," said Robespierre in the Jacobins, "has issued from the bosom of an assembly composed of counter-revolutionists, now purged of its unworthy members. We can now offer to the universe a constitutional code, infinitely superior to any that ever existed, which exhibits the sublime and majestic image of French regeneration. We may now despise the efforts of calumny ; we can say—There is the answer of the patriot deputies ; there is the work of the Mountain." Chabot answered—"In this constitution so loudly praised, I see a power at once colossal and libertine. When you establish so powerful an executive, you sow anew the seeds of royalty. I am told that this power has no *veto* ; but what does that signify ? I am asked, what will be the guarantee of liberty ? I answer, the guillotine."¹

1 Journ. des
Jacobins,
June 12,
No. 431.

16.

Vast powers
of the Com-
mittee of
Public Sal-
vation.

But there never was a greater mistake than to imagine, that this constitution, so republican in form, conferred any real liberties on the people. Its only effect was to concentrate the whole authority of the state in the hands of a few popular leaders. Thenceforward, the Committee of Public Salvation at Paris exercised, without opposition, all the powers of government : it named and dismissed the generals, the judges, and the juries ; appointed the intendants of the provinces ; brought forward all public measures in the Convention, and launched its thunder against every opposing faction. By means of its commissioners it ruled the provinces, generals, and armies, with absolute sway ; and soon after, the law of suspected persons placed the personal freedom of every subject at its disposal ; the Revolutionary Tribunal rendered it the master of every life : the requisitions and the maximum, of every fortune ; the accusations in the Convention, of every member of the legislature. The law of suspected persons, which augmented so prodigiously this tremendous power of the Decemvirs, passed on the 17th September.² It declared all persons

¹ Mij. ii.
296, 297.
Th. v. 59,
93, 94, 95.
Lac. ii. 92.

Sept. 17.

liable to arrest, who, "either by their conduct, their relations, their conversation, or their writing, have shown themselves the partisans of tyranny or of federation, or the enemies of freedom; all persons who have not discharged their debts to the country; all nobles, the husbands, wives, parents, children, brothers, sisters, or agents of emigrants, who have not incessantly manifested their devotion to the Revolution." Under this law, no person had any chance of safety, but in going the utmost length of revolutionary fury.¹*

The established revolutionary committees were declared the judges of the persons liable to arrest. Their number augmented with frightful rapidity; Paris had soon forty-eight. Every village throughout the country followed its example. The number of revolutionary committees, which sprang up in every part of the kingdom to carry into execution this terrible law, was almost incredible. Fifty thousand were soon in operation, from Calais to Bayonne. Five hundred thousand persons, drawn from the dregs of society, disposed in these committees of the lives and liberties of every man in France. With generous resolution, some men entered them with the design of arresting their oppression: they were soon expelled to make way for more obedient ministers of the will of the dictators. Every member of these committees received three francs a-day, and their number was no less than 540,000. It may readily be conceived that in a starving community, thirsting for gold, the revolutionary committees were not long of being filled up with such encouragement. According to the calculations of the Conventionnel Cambon, they cost annually to the nation 591,000,000 of francs in assignats,² or above £24,000,000 sterling. In the immense number of the most

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¹ Hist. Parl. xxix. 108, 112. Moniteur, Sept. 18. Lac. ii. 92. Mig. ii. 296, 297.

17.
Formation of Revolutionary Committees over all France.

² Deux Amis, x. 2.4. Hist. Parl. xxix. 47, 48.

* This atrocious law, as explained by a decree of the municipality of Paris, which was circulated over all France, gave the following definition of suspected persons:—1. All those who, in the assemblies of the people, attest their enthusiasm by cries, menaces, or crafty discourses. 2. All those who more prudently speak only of the misfortunes of the Republic, and are always ready to spread bad news with an affected air of sorrow. 3. All those who have changed their conduct and language according to the course of events, who were mute on the crimes of the Royalists and Federalists, and loudly exclaim against the slight faults of the Republicans. 4. All those who bewail the situation of the farmers or avaricious merchants who have had their property taken from them by the forced requisitions. 5. Those who have the words "Liberty," "Country," and "Republic" in their mouths, frequent the society of priests, gentlemen, Feuillants, Moderates, or Aristocrats, or take an interest in their sufferings. 6. Those who have not taken an active part in supporting the cause of the people, and excuse themselves for their lukewarmness by alleging

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19.
Atrocious
calculations
of these in-
ferior agents
of the Revolu-
tion.

active, ambitious, and wicked of the people who were enlisted on the side of the revolutionary government, and personally interested in its preservation, is to be found the real secret of the firm establishment and long continuance of the Reign of Terror.

The calculations of these inferior agents of cruelty soon outstripped those of their masters. Marat had asserted that 260,000 heads must fall before freedom was secure. The revolutionary committees discovered that 700,000 persons must be sacrificed. The prisons were very soon crowded with victims in every town in France; a more speedy mode of disposing of them was proposed than the massacre of 2d September. "Let them quake in their cells," said Collot d'Herbois in the Convention: "let the base traitors tremble at the successes of our enemies: let a mine be dug under the prisons, and at the approach of those whom they call liberators, let a spark blow them into the air." The retreat of the allied armies rendered unnecessary the inhuman proposal at that moment; and famine, pestilence, and the guillotine, soon made its renewal superfluous. Such was the rapidity of the executions, that it exceeded not only any thing ever witnessed, but any thing hitherto deemed possible. "In the name of equality," says the Republican annalist, "they established a band of permanent assassins; in the name of liberty, they transformed our cities into bastiles; in the name of justice, they every where erected a tribunal to consummate murders; in the name of humanity, they poured forth every where rivers of blood. Robbery was unpunished, spoliation decreed, divorce encouraged, prostitution pensioned, irreligion lauded, falsehood rewarded,¹ tears inter-

¹ Deux
Amis, x. 2,
xl. 45, 47.
Th. v. 353.
Hist. Parl.
xxix. 47.
Lac. ii. 93,
94, Cha-
teaub. Etud.
Hist. Prof.
97, 98.

their patriotic gifts, or services in the National Guard. 7. Those who testified indifference on the proclamation of the Republican constitution, or have expressed vain fears as to its durability. 8. All those who, if they have done nothing against liberty, have done nothing for it. 9. All who do not attend regularly the meetings of their sections, and allege, as an excuse, that they do not like to speak in public, or that their time is occupied by their private affairs. 10. Those who speak with contempt of the constituted authorities, the ensigns of the law, the popular societies, or the defenders of liberty. 11. Those who have signed any anti-revolutionary petitions, or frequented societies or clubs of the higher classes. 12. All who were partisans of La Fayette, or served under him in the execution of the Champ de Mars.—Under these ample clauses, every one was embraced who was obnoxious to the Revolutionists; and the number of prisoners in Paris alone was raised in a few days from three hundred to three thousand, embracing all that remained of the elegance of the Faubourg St Germaine.—*Hist. Parl.* xxix. 108—112.

dicted. An eye wet with pity led to the scaffold. Infamy, old age, grace, beauty, genius, worth, were alike conducted to the guillotine. A general torpor paralysed France: the fear of death froze every heart; its name was inscribed on every door."

This terrible power was every where based upon the co-operation of the multitude. That formidable body generally aided in extending the Reign of Terror: in the clubs, by incessant denunciations of the opulent or respectable classes; in the committees, by multiplying the number of vindictive committals. They supported the sword of the Decemvirs, because it fell upon the class above themselves, and opened to the indigent the wealth and the employments of the better ranks in the state: because it flattered them by the possession of power which they were wholly disqualified to exercise, and ruined the higher ranks, whom they had been taught to regard as their natural enemies. These revolutionary measures were executed over the whole extent of France with the last severity. Conceived by the most ardent minds, they were violent as to principle; carried into effect far from the leaders who framed them, they were rendered still more oppressive by the brutal character of the agents to whom their execution was intrusted. Part of the citizens was compelled to quit their homes; another was immured in dungeons as suspected; the barn-yards of the farmers, the warehouses of the merchants, the shops of the tradesmen, were forcibly emptied for the use of the armies or the government, and nothing but an elusory paper given in exchange. The forced loans were exacted with the utmost rigour; the commissioners said to one, "You are worth 10,000 livres a-year;" to another, "You have 20,000;" and, to save their heads from the guillotine, they were happy to surrender their property to these demands. No better picture can be desired of the tyranny of these despotic commissioners, than is furnished by the report of one of their members to the Convention. "Every where," said Laplanche, who had been sent to the department of Cher, "I have made terror the order of the day; every where I have imposed heavy contributions on the rich and the aristocrats. From Orleans I have extracted fifty thousand francs; and in two days, at Bourges, I

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19.
Which was
every where
based on the
support of
the multi-
tude.

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raised two millions ; where I could not appear in person, my delegates have amply supplied my place. I have dismissed all federalists, imprisoned all the suspected, put all the Sans Culottes in authority. I have forcibly married all the priests, every where electrified the hearts and inflamed the courage of the people. I have passed in review numerous battalions of the National Guard, to confirm their republican spirit, and guillotined numbers of Royalists. In a word, I have completely fulfilled my imperial mandate, and acted every where as a warm partisan of the Mountain, and faithful representative of the Revolution." The Convention approved of his proceedings.¹

¹ Journal de la Montagne, No. 140, p. 1020. Moniteur, Sept. 29. Th. v. 353, 354. Mig. ii. 297.

20.
New era established; Sunday abolished; new division of the Revolutionary Tribunal; and decree against English commerce. Sept. 12.

To obliterate as far as possible all former recollections, a new era was established ; they changed the divisions of the year, the names of the months and days. The ancient and venerable institution of Sunday was abolished ; the period of rest fixed at every tenth day ; time was measured by divisions of ten days ; and the year was divided into twelve equal months, beginning on the 22d September. These changes were preparatory to a general abolition of the Christian religion, and substitution of the worship of Reason in its stead. About the same time, Mr Pitt was, by a decree of the Convention, declared an " enemy of the human race." In the same sitting, it was ordered that all the castles and chateaux in the interior should be demolished. The splendid pile of Versailles narrowly escaped destruction ; as it was, the whole magnificent furniture it contained, the accumulation of centuries, was broken up and sold, and the royal apartments converted into barracks for the soldiers, by whom many of the finest of them were shamefully destroyed. Straw bivouacs were strewed, wood fires lighted on the marble floors of the royal apartments ; the soldiers amused themselves with discharging their loaded muskets at the heads of Le Brun on the walls.² Notwithstanding the vigour and unrelenting severity of the Revolutionary Tribunal at Paris, it was far from answering the views of its founders, or the expectations of the multitude. On the 9th September, accordingly, it was remodeled, and its powers enlarged by a decree of the Convention, which is singularly instructive as to the rapid progress in the thirst for blood in the metropolis. By this decree the Revolutionary Tribunal was divided into *four* chambers,

² Deux Amis, x. 77, 78. Hist. Parl. xxviii. 413. Lac. ii. 84. Toul. iv. 279.

Sept. 9.

each with co-ordinate powers, and all sitting at the same time. Each was to have its public accuser, judges, and juries. This was avowedly based on the necessity of proceeding at once against the moderates, who formed a numerous portion of the community. "The time has now arrived," said Chaumette, at the Jacobins, "when the moderates must undergo the same fate as the aristocrats."¹ In the midst of these domestic changes, the Committee of Public Salvation did not lose sight of their inveterate hostility against England. On the 21st September, Barère, in the name of that body, brought forward a long and impassioned report, characterised by more than the usual amount of animosity against this country. "The hatred of kings and of Carthage," said he, "founded the Roman constitution; the hatred of kings, of emigrants, of nobles, and of the English, ought to consolidate the French Republic. Frenchmen, Europeans, Neutral Powers, Northern Powers, you have the same interest as we in the safety of France. Carthage tormented Italy; London torments Europe; it is a wolf placed on the side of the Continent to devour it, a political excrescence which it is the first duty of liberty to destroy." In pursuance of these principles, the Convention passed two decrees, declaring that no goods or merchandise were, subsequent to 1st January 1794, to be imported into any harbours or colonies of the Republic, except directly, and in French vessels; and totally prohibiting all coasting trade in France, or colonial trade between France and her colonies, but in French vessels, under pain of a fine of 3000 francs and confiscation of the vessel and cargo.²

But all these changes, important as they were, yielded in magnitude to the decree of the Convention on October 10, on the new organisation of the government. This decree was based on a minute and able report by St Just in the name of the Committee of Public Salvation, which fully admitted the deplorable internal state of the Republic, and the total inefficacy of all the measures hitherto taken for the establishment of a regular government, in lieu of the monarchy which had been overthrown. "The administration of the armies," said he, "is overrun by brigands; they sell the rations of the horses; the battalions are in want of cannon and draught animals to draw them; subordination is at an end; all the world robs and sets the

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¹ Journ. de la Montagne, No. 97.
Hist. Parl. xxix, 53.
Mig. li. 298.

² Decree, 21st Sept.
Hist. Parl. xxxii. 469, 481.

21.
Report of St Just on the state of the Republic.
Oct. 10.

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government at defiance. The law of the maximum has proved entirely nugatory; the enemies of the people, more rich than they, buy the provisions above the maximum; the markets are overruled by the cupidity of sellers; the price of provisions is lowered, but the provisions themselves have disappeared. The cultivators, wherever they could, have sold their produce to our enemies in preference to ourselves. The commissaries of the armies, the agents of all kinds, have pillaged at least three milliards, (£120,000,000,) and from the very enormity of their gains they have derived additional means of corrupting the people. The rich have become richer in spite of the taxes laid on them; the dreadful misery of the people has improved their relative situation. Every one has pillaged the state. There is not a single military commander who is not, at this moment, founding his fortune on treachery in favour of the cause of kings. The highest officers of government are still worse. All places are bought, and it is no longer men of property who buy them. Scoundrels purchase on the prospect of plunder; if you chase one from his place, ten enter in at another. The agents of the hospitals have sold their provisions to La Vendée. The commissaries for the armies have become the worst of monopolisers. The assignats have hitherto constituted the strength of the state, but let us not deceive ourselves; if the assignats are not withdrawn from circulation, their holders will enter into competition with the cultivators and the producers, and industry will be ruined. The government has lost half their value in the sale of the national domains; the Republic is the prey of twenty thousand fools or villains who corrupt or cheat it. Government is overwhelmed with correspondence; the bureaux have succeeded to the monarchy; the *demon of writing has invaded the state*, and subordination is at an end. I understand now the wisdom of the Egyptians and the Romans; they wrote little and thought much: government cannot exist without laconism in style. The public service has ceased to be a profession, it has become a trade. The government is a hierarchy of errors and crimes." Such is a picture of revolutionary France by one of the most ardent of the revolutionists. Contrast this with the worst periods of the monarchy, and drawn by the bitterest of its opponents.¹

¹ Rapport de St Just, Oct. 10. Hist. Parl. xxix. 159, 167. Moniteur, Oct. 11.

The remedy proposed by St Just, and adopted by the Convention, for these disastrous evils, consisted in a prodigious increase of the power of the executive. By the decree which passed on his motion, the government of France was declared revolutionary till peace; and the executive council, the ministers, the generals, the whole constituted bodies, were placed under the direction of the Committee of Public Salvation, which was to render an account of its proceedings every eight days to the Convention. The revolutionary laws were to be executed rapidly; the government was to correspond directly with the districts; all the generals were to be nominated by the Convention, on the recommendation of the Committee of Public Salvation. The grain produced in every district was to be calculated; the amount needed for the subsistence of its inhabitants ascertained, and the remainder subjected to requisition for the public service. Paris was to be provisioned in this way for a year. A revolutionary army was to be raised to enforce these requisitions, and repress all counter-revolutionary movements—it was to be under the direction of the Committee of Public Salvation; a new court was to be established, named by the Convention, to punish embezzlers of the public money, and make public officers render an account of their fortunes. It may safely be affirmed, that this decree, coupled with that of suspected persons which had been passed a few weeks before, vested more absolute power in the Committee of Public Salvation than had ever before been wielded by any government upon earth.¹

Meanwhile the prisons of Paris exhibited the most extraordinary spectacle. Filled at once with ordinary malefactors, and with all that yet remained of dignity, beauty, or virtue in the Republic, they presented the most unparalleled assemblage that modern Europe had yet seen of unblushing guilt and unbending virtue, of dignified manners and revolutionary vulgarity, of splendid talent and frightful atrocity. In some, where the rich were allowed to provide for their own comforts, a singular degree of affluence and even elegance for some time prevailed; in others, the most noble captives were weeping on a couch of straw, with no other covering than a few filthy rags. The French character, imbued beyond any other in Europe

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22.

Decree vesting supreme power in the Committee of Public Salvation.
Oct. 10.

¹ Decree, Oct. 10.
Hist. Parl. xxix. 173, 174.

23.

Extraordinary spectacle presented by the prisons of Paris.

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with elasticity, and capability to endure misfortunes, in many instances rose superior to all the horrors with which the jails were surrounded. From the multitude and lustre of their fellow-sufferers, every one felt his own calamities sensibly softened. By degrees the ordinary interests of life began to exert their influence even on the verge of the tomb; poetry enchanted the crowded cells by touching strains, eloquence exerted its fascinating ascendant, beauty renewed its silken chains. The female captives of rank became attentive to their dress; intimacies and attachments were formed; and, amidst all the agitation and agony, consequent on their protracted sufferings, the excitements of a happier existence were felt even to the foot of the scaffold. By degrees, as the prosecutions became more frequent, and numbers were daily led out to execution, the sense of common danger united them in the bonds of the strongest affection; they rejoiced and wept together; and the constant thinning of their number produced a sympathy among the survivors, which outlived every other feeling of existence.¹

¹ Tableau
des Prisons
de Paris, i.
16, 24.
Rioulle, 46,
51, 60, 68.
Th. v. 362,
364.

24.
Trial of
General
Custine.
Aug. 13.

General Custine, who commanded the army of Flanders at the time of the capture of Valenciennes by the English, was denounced by the agents of the Convention, and shortly after brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, charged with having entered into treacherous correspondence with the Allies, and of having been the means of causing Frankfort, Mayence, and Valenciennes, to fall into the hands of the enemy. When the state of the armies, described in the report already quoted by St Just, is considered, it will not be deemed surprising that disasters befell the forces of the Republic. The only thing really surprising is, that France was not conquered. The prosecutors entirely failed in adducing any satisfactory evidence against him. His beautiful and gifted daughter-in-law in vain sat daily by his side, and exerted herself to the utmost in his behalf; General Baraguay d'Hilliers, with generous courage, supported him by his military knowledge and experience. Her grace, and the obvious injustice of the accusation, produced some impression on the judges, and a few inclined to an acquittal; immediately the Revolutionary Tribunal itself was complained of at the Jacobin Club.²

² Bull. du
Trib. Rév.
Nos. 83, 84.
Hist. Parl.
xxviii 254,
259.

"It gives me great pain," said Hébert at that great centre of the Revolution, "to be obliged to denounce an authority which was the hope of the patriots, and hitherto has so well deserved their confidence. But the Revolutionary Tribunal is on the point of absolving a guilty person, in favour of whom the beauties of Paris are moving heaven and earth. The daughter of Custine, as skilful an actress in this city as her father was at the head of the armies, solicits every one on his behalf." Robespierre made some cutting remarks on the spirit of chicanery and form which had taken possession of the Tribunal, and strongly advocated his condemnation. The municipality of Paris, on the motion of Hébert, passed a decree prohibiting the fair supplicants (*jolies intrigantes*) from obtaining entrance to any of the jails or police-offices. The consequences were decisive; General Custine was at length found guilty, and condemned amidst the rapturous applause of the Jacobins and Cordeliers, who filled the court. Young Madame Custine narrowly escaped death, in consequence of the noble part she had taken in his defence. When she appeared on the stair on leaving the court, a savage cry arose in the mob; the vociferations of the people, and their gestures, showed they were preparing to murder her on the spot. If she had sunk down, she would have been instantly torn in pieces; even the appearance of faltering would have proved fatal. Uncertain whether to advance or recede, she hesitated a moment, and the people were just springing forward to seize her, when an unknown woman in the crowd secretly pressed her hand, and taking the child, which she carried in her arms, from her breast, gave it to her with the words, "Return it at the bottom of the stair." She did so, and, protected by the infant citizen, escaped unhurt, and gave back the child; but she never saw her deliverer more.* Custine was sent to the scaffold, and, though shaken for a moment, died firmly. The crowd murmured because he appeared on the fatal chariot with a minister of religion by his side, and knelt to pray on the steps of the scaffold before he ascended.¹ General Houchard, the second in command, who had denounced Custine, notwithstanding his recent

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25.

Denuncia-
tion of the
Jolies intrig-
antes at the
Jacobins and
the Conven-
tion.

Aug. 27.

1 Lac. xi.
296, 297.
299. Toul.
iv. 62, 131.
Th. v. 297,
Bull. du
Trib. Rév.
No. 95, p.
390. Hist.
Parl. xxviii.
417.

* This curious incident is perfectly authenticated.—See *La Russie en 1839*, par Marquis CUSTINE, i. 39.

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26.
Situation of
Marie An-
toinette.

success over the Allies at Hondschoote, shortly after shared the same fate; and Baraguay d'Hilliers, reserved for higher destinies, was sent to prison, from whence he was only delivered by the fall of Robespierre.

Marie Antoinette was the next victim. Since the death of the King, his unfortunate family had been closely confined in the Temple; the Princesses had themselves discharged all the duties of menial servants to the Queen and the Dauphin. A project had been formed, with every appearance of success, for her escape: she at first listened to the proposal, but on the evening before it was to be carried into execution, declared her resolution never to separate from her son. "Whatever pleasure it would give me," said she, "to escape from this place, I cannot consent to be separated from him. I can feel no enjoyment without my children: with them I can regret nothing." Even in the solitude of her confinement, the cares of his education were sedulously attended to; and the mind of the young King already comprehended the duties of royalty. The Revolution of 31st May, however, was felt in its full severity by the prisoners in the Temple, as well as all the other captives in France. Hébert insisted that the family of the tyrant should not be better treated than a family of Sans Culottes; and he obtained a decree from the magistrates, by which every species of luxury was withdrawn. Their fare was reduced to the humblest kind; oil wicker-lamps became their only light, and their dress the coarsest habiliments. He himself soon after visited the Temple, and took from the unhappy prisoners even the little movables on which their only comfort depended. Nothing was found tending to inculcate them: from the Queen they took a stick of sealing-wax, from the Princess-Royal a prayer for France. They carried off, soon after, the last hat worn by Louis, which the Queen was striving to preserve as a relic, "as a suspicious article." Eighty-four louis, which the Princess Elizabeth had received from the Princess Lamballe, and which she had hitherto concealed, could not elude this rigorous search, and were taken away.¹

¹ Duchesse d'Angoulême, 17.
Lac. x. 296.
Th. v. 369.

Soon the barbarity of the Government envied the widowed and captive Queen even the pleasure of beholding her son. The discovery of an abortive conspiracy for

their liberation was made the ground for separating the Dauphin from his mother, and delivering him to the inhuman Simon, the agent and friend of Robespierre. In vain the young Prince demanded to see the decree which authorised this cruel separation. His mother, weeping, resisted for above an hour, with the little boy clinging to her neck; but at length she was forced to let him go by the threat of instantly putting him to death. When removed, this poor child remained two days without taking nourishment; after he was for ever withdrawn from her sight. His beautiful fair locks, which still fell in profuse curls over his shoulders, were cut off, and he was dressed in coarse garments, and compelled to wear the *bonnet rouge*, and the pantaloons and coat which composed the dress called "*à la Carmagnole*." All the cruel treatment of Simon could not extinguish the native generosity of his disposition. "Capet," said he, "if the Vendéans were to succeed in delivering you, and placing you on the throne, what would you do with me?"—"I would pardon you," replied the infant monarch. "What am I to do with the child?" said Simon to the Committee of Public Salvation:—"Banish him?"—"No."—"Kill him?"—"No."—"Poison him?"—"No."—"What then?"—"Get quit of him." These instructions were too faithfully executed. By depriving him of air, exercise, and wholesome food, by keeping him in a continual state of squalid filth, the unfortunate child was at length brought in the next year to his grave, without imposing upon his keepers the necessity of actual violence.¹

On the 1st August the design of destroying the Queen was for the first time brought forward in the Convention. The Committee of Public Salvation had been divided on the step. Robespierre opposed it; but Barère, Billaud Varennes, and the party who ultimately destroyed him, carried the point against him. "How," said Barère, "do the enemies of the Republic still hope for success? Is it because we have too long forgotten the crimes of the Austrian? Is it because we have shown so strange an indulgence to the race of our ancient tyrants? It is time that this unwise apathy should cease—it is time to extirpate from the soil of the Republic the last roots of royalty. As for the children of Louis the conspirator, they are

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27.

Cruel treatment of the Dauphin.

July 3.

1 Lac. x.
230, 233.
Th. v. 376.
Duchesse
d'Angoulême, 18,
17, 26.

28.

Decree of the Convention on the motion of Barère for the trial of the Queen.

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hostages for the Republic. The charge of their maintenance shall be reduced to what is necessary for the sustenance of two individuals. But behind them lurks a woman, who has been the cause of all the disasters of France, whose share in every project adverse to France has long been known. National justice claims her as its own. It is to the Tribunal appointed for the trial of conspirators that we must send her. It is thus alone that you can make Francis and George, Charles and William, sensible of the crimes which their ministers have committed." In pursuance of these views, he proposed that Marie Antoinette should be forthwith sent to the Conciergerie, separated from her family, and brought to trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal: and that all the members of the House of Capet, with the exception of the two children in confinement, should be banished the French territory. A decree in these terms, like all the other decrees at this time, passed unanimously, without any debate.^{1*}

¹ *Moniteur*,
2d, 7th, and
9th Aug.
O'Meara, ii.
170.

29.
Queen sent
to the Con-
ciergerie.
Aug. 2.

On the 2d August the Queen was separated from her weeping sister and daughter, and confined alone in the prison of the Conciergerie, the most rigorous of the many rigorous places of confinement at that time known in Paris. A narrow, gloomy, and damp apartment, a worn mattress, and a bed of straw, constituted the sole accommodations of one for whom the splendour of Versailles once seemed hardly adequate. She was kept there above two months in the closest confinement; her mild and heroic demeanour interested even the wife of the jailer on her behalf. Night and day a guard of gendarmes was kept in her small and wretched cell. But the fidelity of her devoted adherents won over these guardians of the municipality; some faithful friends visited her there, and a courageous priest, M. l'Abbé Magnier, at the hazard of his life, often administered to her the sacrament, which she received with the most devout gratitude. Madame de Staël published a pamphlet, in which, with generous eloquence, she urged the impolicy as well as injustice of

* "Robespierre," said Napoleon, "was by no means the worst character who figured in the Revolution. He opposed trying the Queen. He was not an atheist, like many of his colleagues. He was a fanatic, a monster; but incorruptible, incapable of robbing or putting to death from personal enmity. He was an enthusiast, who really believed he was doing right."—O'MEARA, ii. 170.

further severity against the royal family. "Women of France," she concluded, "I appeal to you: your empire is over, if ferocity continues to reign; your destinies are gone, if your tears fall in vain. Defend, then, the Queen, by the arms which Nature has given you: Seek the infant, who will perish if bereaved of his mother, and must become the object of painful interest, from the unheard-of calamities which have befallen him. Let him ask on his knees the life of his mother: childhood can pray; it can pray, when as yet it knows not the calamity which it would avert." But her efforts were in vain. On the 14th October the Queen was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal.¹

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¹ Duchesse d'Angoulême, 28, 30. De Staël, *Reflections, sur le Procès de la Reine.* Œuvres, xvi. 32. Lac. x. 239, 241, 249.

An immense crowd assembled to witness her trial. The spectacle of a QUEEN being tried by her subjects was as yet new in the history of the world; the populace, how much soever accustomed to sanguinary scenes, were strongly excited by this event. Sorrow and confinement had whitened her once beautiful hair; her figure and air still commanded the admiration of all who beheld her; her cheeks, pale and emaciated, were occasionally tinged with a vivid colour, at the mention of those she had lost. Out of deference to her husband's memory, rather than from her own inclination, she pleaded to the court. Their interrogatories were of no avail; her answers, like those of the King, were clear, distinct, and unequivocal. As the form of examining witnesses was necessary, the prosecutors called the Count d'Estaing, who commanded the military at Versailles on the 5th October 1789. But though the Queen had been his political opponent, he had too high a sense of honour to tell any thing but the truth, and spoke only of her heroism on that trying occasion, and her noble resolution expressed in his presence to die with her husband, rather than obtain life by leaving him. Manuel, notwithstanding his hostility to the court during the Legislative Assembly, declared he would not depone to one fact against the accused. The venerable Bailly was next brought in: he now beheld the fruits of his democratic enthusiasm, and wept when he saw the Queen. When asked if he knew "the woman Capet," he turned with a melancholy air to his sovereign, and profoundly bowing his head, said, "Yes, I know *Madame*." He then declared that he could say nothing

30.
Trial of
the Queen.
Oct. 14.

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against her, and that all the pretended accounts extracted from the young Prince, relative to the journey to Varennes, were false. The Jacobins were furious at his testimony, and, from the violence of their language, he easily anticipated the fate which they reserved for himself. Recourse was then had to the testimony of other witnesses; the monsters Hébert and Simon were examined, but what they had to declare amounted to nothing but proofs of the piety and affectionate disposition of the Queen and the Princess Elizabeth.* At last Hébert deposed that the Dauphin had informed him that he had been initiated into improper practices by his mother; the Queen, overwhelmed with horror at the atrocious falsehood, remained silent. A jurymen having insisted that she should answer,—"If I have not hitherto spoken," said she, "it is because nature refused to answer to such an accusation, brought against a mother." Turning to the audience, with inexpressible dignity, she added—"I appeal to all the mothers who hear me, whether such a thing is possible."¹

¹ Bull. du Trib. Rév. No. 24, 25, pp. 95, 98. Hist. Parl. xxix. 354, 372. Lac. x. 250, 251. Th. v. 3, 4, 375.

"Abash'd the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is; and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely—saw and pined
His loss: but chiefly to find here observed
His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd
Undaunted."†

It was of no avail; notwithstanding the eloquent and courageous defence of her counsel, she was condemned.

² 31.
Her heroic
conduct the
night before
her death.

At four on the morning of the day of her execution, she wrote a letter to the Princess Elizabeth, worthy to be placed beside the testament of Louis. "To you, my sister," said she, "I address myself for the last time. I have been condemned, not to an ignominious death; it is so only to the guilty; but to rejoin your brother. Innocent like him, I hope to emulate his firmness at the last hour. I weep only for my children: I hope that one day, when

* The chief facts deposed to by Hébert were—"Qu'il a trouvé un livre d'église à elle appartenant, dans lequel était un de ces signes contre-révolutionnaires, consistant en un cœur enflammé, traversé par une flèche, sur lequel était écrit, 'Jesu, miserere nobis.' Une autrefois il trouva dans la chambre d'Elizabeth un chapeau qui fut reconnu pour avoir appartenu à Louis Capet: cette découverte ne lui permit plus de douter qu'il existe parmi ses collègues quelques hommes dans le cas de se dégrader en point de servir la tyrannie. . . . Qu'il n'y avait pas même à douter par ce que dit le fils Capet, qu'il n'y ait un acte incestueux entre la mère et le fils," [a child of eight years old!]-*Bulletin du Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, No. 24, p. 95, 96; and *Hist. Parl.* xxix. 354, 355

† *Paradise Lost*, iv. 845.

they have regained their rank, they may be reunited to you, and feel the blessing of your tender care. Let them ever recollect what I have never ceased to inculcate, that a scrupulous discharge of duty is the only foundation of a good life; friendship and mutual confidence its best consolation. May my son never forget the last words of his father, which I now repeat from myself—*Never to attempt to revenge our death.* I die true to the Catholic religion—the faith of my fathers, which I have never ceased to profess. Deprived of all spiritual consolation, I can only seek for pardon from Heaven. I ask forgiveness of all who know me; from you, in an especial manner, my sister, for all the pain I may have involuntarily given you: I pray for forgiveness to all my enemies for the evil they have done; and I now bid farewell to my aunts, brothers, and sisters. I have had friends: the idea of being separated from them is one of the greatest regrets I feel in dying. Let them know that in my last moments I thought of them. Adieu! my good and tender sister; may this letter reach you. Think ever of me; and I embrace you with all my heart, as well as those poor and dear infants. My God! how heart-rending it is to quit them for ever! Adieu! adieu! I am now to bid farewell to all but my religious duties.”¹*

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XIV.

1793.

1 Duchesse
D'Angou-
lême, 134.
Lac. x. 259.

When led out for execution, she was dressed in white. She had cut off her hair with her own hands. Placed in a chariot, with her arms tied behind her back, she was conducted by a long circuit to the place of execution: which was on the Place of the Revolution,† where her husband had perished. A constitutional priest was seated by her side. Thirty thousand armed men lined the streets, and ten times that number gazed on the spectacle. Her air, like that of Charlotte Corday, was calm and serene. She spoke little, but gazed with an expression of interest on the numerous revolutionary names and signs, which had so altered the character of the metropolis since she last saw it. When the chariot stopped in the Place Louis XV.,

32.
Her execu-
tion.
Oct. 16.

* The authenticity of this letter is placed beyond a doubt. It was taken as soon as written to Robespierre; found after his death among his papers by Courtois, and discovered among the latter's papers in 1815, when these were searched by order of Government. A fac-simile of it is annexed to the Duchesse d'Angoulême's narrative.—See *Biographie Universelle*, xxvii. 88, (MARIE ANTOINETTE.)

† Now the Place Louis XV.

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XIV.

1793.

¹ Bull. du
Trib. Rév.
No. 33, p.
128. Prud-
homme,
Rév. de
Paris. Lac.
x. 261.
Toul. iv.
107. Th.
v. 337.
Duval, Souv.
de la Ter-
reur, iv. 68.

she turned her eyes to the Tuileries, once the scene of her joys, and a bright flush suffused her countenance, which soon gave place to the former pallid hue. The people, roused by revolutionary emissaries, raised savage shouts of joy as she moved along; the Queen, with a serene look, indicating pity rather than suffering, bore that last expression of popular fury. When the procession reached the fatal spot in the centre of the Place Louis XV., she ascended with a firm step the scaffold, and at the top of the stair trode accidentally on the foot of the executioner. "Pardon me, sir;" said she, "I did not do it intentionally." * Her last words were, "O God! pardon my enemies: farewell, my beloved children; I am about to join your father!" She then calmly resigned herself to the executioners: her countenance was illuminated by an expression of Christian hope; and the daughter of the Cæsars died with a firmness that did honour to her race.¹

33.
Her charac-
ter.

Thus perished, at the age of thirty-nine, Marie Antoinette, Queen of France. Called in early life to the first throne in Europe, surrounded by a splendid court and a flattering nobility, blessed with an affectionate husband and promising family, she seemed to have approached, as nearly as the uncertainty of life will admit, to the limits of human felicity. She died, after years of suffering and anguish, broken by captivity, subdued by misfortune, bereft of her children, degraded from her throne, on the scaffold, where she had recently before seen her husband perish. History has not recorded a more terrible instance of reverse of fortune, or one more illustrative of the wisdom of the ancient saying, "that none should be pronounced happy till the day of his death."² † Her character has

* Plutarch
in Solon.

* En montant à l'échafaud Antoinette mit par mégarde le pied sur celui du citoyen Samson, et l'exécuteur des jugemens en ressentit assez de douleur pour s'écrier, "Ah!" Elle se retourna en lui disant, "Monsieur, je vous demande excuse: je ne l'ai pas fait exprès." Prudhomme's account of the execution of the Queen is far the most minute; and as he was a furious Republican, and ally of Danton's, it is liable to no suspicion.—See PRUDHOMME'S *Révolutions de Paris*, No. 212, p. 97.—This incident attracted so much notice, that it formed the subject of an engraving executed at the time, and with these words at its foot.

† The same sentiment is finely expressed by Euripides—

Θ. Χρὴ δ' οὐκ ὅτ' εἰπὼν ἔδεν ὀλβιον βροτῶν
Ἰλιν ἄν θανάτος τὴν τελευταίαν ἰδῆς
"Ὅπως πικρὰς ἡμέραν ἤξει κατὰ."

EURIPIDES, *Andromache*, 100—102.

come comparatively pure and unsullied out of the revolutionary furnace. An affectionate daughter and a faithful wife, she preserved in the two most corrupted courts of Europe the simplicity and affections of domestic life. If in early youth her indiscretion and familiarity were such as prudence would condemn, in later years her spirit and magnanimity were such as justice must admire. She was more fitted for the storms of adversity than the sunshine of prosperity. Sometimes ambitious and overbearing in the earlier years of her reign: it was the sufferings of her later days that drew forth the nobler parts of her character. The worthy descendant of Maria Theresa, she would have died in the field combating her enemies, rather than live on the throne subject to their control. Years of misfortune quenched her spirit, but did not lessen her courage; in the solitude of the Temple, she discharged, with exemplary fidelity, every duty to her husband and her children, and bore a reverse of fortune, unparalleled even in that age of calamity, with a heroism that never was surpassed.¹

Her marriage to Louis was considered at the time as a masterstroke in politics. A long alliance between the rival monarchies was anticipated from the propitious union which seemed to unite their destinies. It led to a war more terrible than any which had yet shaken these powers; to the repeated capture of both capitals by hostile armies; to mutual exasperation unprecedented between their people. So uncertain are the conclusions of political wisdom, when founded on personal interests or connexions, and not on the great and permanent principles which govern human affairs. The manners of the Queen accelerated the Revolution: her foreign descent exasperated the public discontent; her undeserved death was one means of bringing about its punishment. The justice of Heaven neither slumbered nor slept. Slow, but sure, came the hour of Germany's revenge. On the day twenty years from that on which she ascended the scaffold, commenced the fatal rout of France on the field of Leipzig.²

On the day of the execution of the Queen, Barrère regaled Robespierre, St Just, and some others of their party, at a tavern. Robespierre condemned the proceedings against the Queen, and in particular Hébert's monstrous evidence, with so much vehemence that he broke his plate

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XIV.

1793.

¹ Toul. iv.
108, 109.

^{34.}
Fatal effects
of her alli-
ance with
Louis.

² On Oct.
16, 1813.
She died
Oct. 16,
1793.

^{35.}
Singular
banquet of
Robespierre
and Barrère.

CHAP. * during the violence of his gesticulation. But Barère and
XIV. the others defended the proceedings, and announced more
1793. extensive plans of carnage. "The vessel of the Revolution," said he, "cannot be wafted into port but on waves of blood. We must begin with the members of the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies. That rubbish must be swept away."¹

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 124.

36.
Arrest and
death of
Bailly.
Nov. 11.

This intention was not long of being carried into effect. The Decemvirs next proceeded to destroy their former friends, and the earliest supporters of the Revolution. Bailly, mayor of Paris, and president of the Assembly on occasion of the celebrated Jeu de Paume, was arrested, and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal. His profound and eloquent scientific researches, his great services in the cause of liberty, his enlightened philanthropy, pleaded in vain before that sanguinary court. The recollection of the Champs de Mars, of the red flag, and the courageous stand which he had made with La Fayette against the fury of the multitude, as well as his recent refusal to depone against Marie Antoinette at her trial, were present to the minds of his prosecutors. The witnesses adduced spoke against him with an unusual degree of asperity. His last words to the court were—"I have ever executed the law: I will know how to obey it, since you are its organ." He was condemned to die, and in his case, as he had foreseen, a refinement of cruelty was employed. He was first brought to the common place of execution in the Place Louis XV., but when there, the mob, with savage yells, insisted he should be taken to the Champ de Mars, as the place where he had first hoisted the flag of defiance to Revolutionary atrocity. Thither he was accordingly led; the guillotine was taken down, and an immense crowd of vindictive Jacobins, among whom were a large proportion of women, and persons whom he had saved from famine during his mayoralty, followed to witness his death. On foot, in the most dreadful weather, the unhappy victim was led behind the guillotine during a tedious passage of two hours, from the Place Louis XV., to the place finally fixed on for his execution on the Champ de Mars near the river, opposite Chaillot. During this passage he frequently fell from the violence to which he was exposed;² he was assailed with hisses and pelted

² Bull. du
Trib. Rév.
No. 81, p.
323. Lac.
x. 292. Th.
x. 294, 396,
397. Toul.
iv. 130.
Deux Amis,
xi. 249.
Biog. Univ.
iii. 242, 243.

with mud, and the first President of the Assembly received several inhuman blows from the populace. At the Champ de Mars, the red flag, emblematic of the martial law which he had authorised, was burned over his head, and Bailly was led again on foot, amidst a drenching fall of snow and sleet, to the banks of the river, where he was executed. "You tremble, Bailly," said one of the spectators. "My friend," said the old man, "it is only from cold."

The eloquent Barnave, one of the most upright members of the Constituent Assembly, was soon after condemned, notwithstanding a defence by himself of unrivalled pathos and ability. Duport Dutertre, formerly minister of Louis XVI., on the same day shared the same fate. Condorcet had fled when the lists of proscription were first prepared by the victors on the 2d June; for eight months he was concealed in Paris, and employed the tedious hours of solitude in composing his celebrated "*Esquisse du Progrès de l'Esprit Humain*," a work in which much learning is illustrated by fervid eloquence; and the warm but visionary anticipations of future improvement were indulged, amidst the deepest circumstances of present disaster. In gratitude to the hostess who had sheltered him, he wrote a poem, containing a sentiment descriptive of the feelings of his party during those melancholy times—

"Choisi d'être oppresseur ou la victime,
J'embrassai le malheur et leur laissai le crime."

Terrified by the numerous lists of persons condemned for concealing the proscribed, he declared to his generous protector his resolution to leave her. "I must not remain any longer with you; I am *hors la loi*."—"But we," replied she, "are not *hors de l'humanité*." He set out, nevertheless, disguised as a common labourer; at the village of Clamart, the fineness of his linen awakened the suspicion of his landlady, who had him arrested and sent to prison, where next morning he was found dead from the effects of a speedy poison, which, like many others in those days of terror, he constantly carried about his person.¹

The Duke of Orleans, the early and interested instigator of the Revolution, was its next victim. Billaud Varennes said in the Convention—"The time has come when all the conspirators should be known and struck. I demand that we no longer pass over in silence a man whom we

CHAP.
XIV.
1793.

37.
Of Barnave
and Condor-
cet.
Oct. 29.

¹ Bull. du.
Trib. Rév.
No. 72. Th.
ix. 286, 287.
Deux Amis,
xi. 21, 22.

38.
Trial of the
Duke of Or-
leans.

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

seem to have forgot, despite the numerous facts which depone against him. I demand that D'Orleans be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal, with the other conspirators." Loud applauses followed these words; and Robespierre immediately added—"There can be no one so blind as not to be enlightened by the flames of Lyons and Marseilles, which the conspirators have lighted; or so deaf as not to hear the cries of the patriots massacred in La Vendée, Belgium, and Toulou; wherever, in short, that execrable faction have possessed any influence. I demand that we instantly proceed to the vote." The Convention, once his hiringling adulators, unanimously supported the proposal. In vain he alleged his accession to the disorders of 5th October, his support of the revolt of August 10th, his vote against the King on January 17th; his condemnation was speedily pronounced.¹

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 176,
177.

39.
His execu-
tion.

He demanded only one favour, which was granted, that his execution should be postponed for twenty-four hours. In the interval, he had a repast prepared with care, on which he feasted with more than usual avidity; when led out to execution, he gazed for a time, with a smile on his countenance, on the Palais Royal, the scene of his former orgies. He was detained above a quarter of an hour in front of that palace by order of Robespierre, who had in vain asked his daughter's hand in marriage, and had promised, if he would relent in that extremity, to excite a tumult which would save his life. Depraved as he was, he had too much honourable feeling left to consent to such a sacrifice, and remained in expectation of death, without giving the expected signal of acquiescence, for twenty minutes, when he was permitted to continue his journey to the scaffold. He met his fate with stoical fortitude; and it is pleasing to have to record one redeeming trait at the close of a life stained by so much selfish passion and guilty ambition—he preferred death to sacrificing his daughter to the tyrant. Never was more strongly exemplified the effect of materialism and infidelity, in rendering men callous to futurity, and degrading a naturally noble disposition. The multitude applauded his execution; not a voice was raised in his favour, though it was mainly composed of the very men who had been instigated by his adulators, and fed by his extravagance.

The destruction of Bailly, Custine, and the Duke of Orleans, annihilated the party attached to a constitutional monarchy. The early objects of the Revolution were thus frustrated, its first supporters destroyed by the passions they had awakened among the people. The overthrow of the Gironde extinguished the hope of a republic; the massacre of the Constitutionalists, that of a limited monarchy. The prophecy of Vergniaud was rapidly approaching its accomplishment; the Revolution, like Saturn, was successfully devouring all its progeny.¹

These sanguinary proceedings were followed by a measure as unnecessary as it was barbarous—the violation of the tombs of St Denis, and the profanation of the sepulchres of the Kings of France. By a decree of the Convention, on August 3, these venerable asylums of departed greatness were ordered to be destroyed *—a measure never adopted by the English Parliament during the frenzy of the Fifth Monarchy men; and which proves, that political frenzy will push men to greater extremities than religious fanaticism. A furious multitude, headed by the revolutionary army, precipitated itself out of Paris; the tombs of Henry IV., of Francis I., and of Louis XII., were ransacked, and their bones scattered in the air. Even the glorious name of Turenne could not protect his grave from spoliation. His remains were found almost undecayed, as when he received the fatal wound on the banks of the Lech. The bones of Charles V., the saviour of his country, were dispersed. At his feet was discovered the coffin of the faithful Du Guesclin, and French hands profaned the skeleton of him before whom English invasion had rolled back. Most of these tombs proved to be strongly secured. Much time, and no small exertion of skill and labour, was required to burst their barriers. They would have resisted for ever the decay of time, or the violence of enemies; they yielded to the fury of domestic dissension.²

* There is something solemn and yet interesting in the opening of the tombs of the departed great. It carries us back at once to far distant ages: the corpses in their grave-clothes, with their features sometimes unchanged, are

• “Les tombeaux et mausolées des ci-devant rois, élevés dans l’église de St Denis, dans le Temple, et autres lieux dans toute l’étendue de la République, seront détruits le 10 Août prochain.”—*Decree, Aug. 3, 1793. Hist. Parl. xxviii. 397.*

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XIV.

1793.

¹ Hist. de la
Conv. iii.
180. Lac.
xi. 289, 290.
Toul. iv.
121, 122.

40.
Violation of
the tombs of
St Denis.
Destruction
of monu-
ments over
all France.

² Lac. x.
264, 265,
and Fr. Hist
ii. 142.
Chateaub.
Etd. Hist.
iv. 169

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

41.
Particulars
of the spoli-
ation of the
tombs.
Oct. 12.

revealed to the view ; it seems as if the awful scene of the day of judgment had arrived, when the graves shall be opened and the dead arise. The measures of the French Revolutionists displayed, beyond all former example among men, this terrible spectacle. By a decree of the municipality of Paris on the 12th October, it was ordered that all graves should be carefully searched, in order to discover and bring to the public treasury any jewels, gold, silver, bronze, or even lead, that might be found. This order, joined to the rapacity of the searchers, and the fanatical zeal of the people, caused the tombs of the kings and paladins at St Denis, to be ransacked with unparalleled eagerness. But immense labour was required to effect an entrance. The magnificent doors of bronze, the gift of Charlemagne, which guarded the entrance, long resisted their efforts, but at length yielded to repeated blows of prodigious sledge-hammers, and were nearly shattered to pieces. One of the first tombs rifled was that of Pepin, father of that great conqueror. All the other mausoleums were opened and ransacked in succession : the vast floor of the dark subterraneous church was covered with the bones of kings, mingled with the broken fragments of their marble sepulchres. The arms and the heads of Louis XII. and Francis I. were severed and heaped in a corner of the church. The monuments of Turenne and Du Guesclin were demolished and ruined. The abomination of desolation had penetrated every part of the cemetery.¹

¹ Duval,
Souv. de la
Terreur, v.
32, 46.

42.
State in
which the
bodies of
the kings
were found.

One of the tombs bore date so early as 580 : it was that of Dagobert, son of Childeric, king of France. Nearly the whole sepulchres of the first race of kings were destroyed in a few hours. Those of the Bourbon family, from their more costly construction, required a longer time for their demolition. But it was at last effected, and the dead in their grave-clothes were drawn forth. The body of Henry IV. was so entire that it was instantly recognised from the prints by the spectators : a fragrant perfume, when the lid was removed from the coffin, filled the air, from aromatic substances in the interior of the skull ; but as the grave-clothes were removed, the two deep fissures made by the dagger of Ravallac still yawned almost as deep as when the wounds were received in the side. The venerable remains were at first the object of general respect ; but on

the 14th, a Jacobin orator, Javogres, roused the people by harangues, and they tore the body in pieces, and cast the fragments into a vast gulf, filled with corpses and quicklime, where they were mixed with all the others, and irrecoverably lost. The body of Louis XIII. was still entire, but completely dried up; that of Louis XIV. was nothing but a putrid mass, which emitted a fetid exhalation. His remains had come to the nothingness so often foretold in his presence, when surrounded by the pomp of Versailles, by Massillon and Bossuet. The body of Louis XV. was found at the entrance of the tomb according to custom, till his successor occupied his place, when the former king was removed to the vault. It exhibited so hideous a mass of putrefaction, that when the lid was removed from the coffin the pestilential exhalation filled the whole Abbey, and was even felt in the adjoining houses. To purify the air, discharges of musketry were fired around the Abbey: they were heard in Paris at the very moment that the head of Marie Antoinette fell on the scaffold, in the Place Louis XV.¹

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

¹ Duval, iv.
41, 42, 68.

All the bodies found there, kings, queens, and heroes, were thrown into a vast trench and destroyed by quicklime. The body of Du Guesclin was lost in this way. That of Turenne alone escaped, not from any reverence for his memory, but from the fortunate circumstance that, after it had been ordered to be thrown into the common tomb, two of the officers of the Museum of Natural History requested to have it, as being a "well preserved mummy, which might be of service to the science of comparative anatomy."* It was delivered to them accordingly, and carried to the Jardin des Plantes, where it lay for nine years in a store-room, between the skeletons of a monkey and a camel. In 1802, however, Napoleon heard of the circumstance, and had the body of the illustrious warrior removed to the church of the Invalides, where it now reposes beside his own mortal remains. After the tombs had all been ransacked, and the bodies thrown into the

43.
Bodies of
Du Guesclin
and Tu-
renne.

Oct. 13.

* "L'ordre avait été déjà donné de transporter le corps de Turenne au dépôt général des autres cadavres, lorsque deux administrateurs du Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle réclamèrent le corps de ce grand homme, comme une momie bien conservée qui pourrait servir aux progrès de l'anatomie comparée—on le déposa dans un grenier où il est resté neuf années entre le squelette d'un singe et celui d'un chameau!"—DUVAL, *Souvenirs de la Terreur*, iv. 74.

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

1 Duval, iv.
64, 78.Prudhomme,
Elev. de
Paris, No.
215, p. 216.

common trench, where they were destroyed by quicklime, the whole jewellery, plate, and treasures, found in the treasury of St Denis, and all the other churches in France, as well as what had been extracted from the tombs, were brought in great pomp to the Convention, where they were poured out in confusion on the floor, amidst deafening acclamations of "Vive la Republique."¹*

44.
Destruction
of monu-
ments over
all France.

This was immediately followed by a general attack upon the monuments and remains of antiquity throughout all France. The sepulchres of the great of past times, of the barons and generals of the feudal ages, of the paladins, and of the crusaders, were involved in one undistinguishable ruin. It seemed as if the glories of antiquity were forgotten, or sought to be buried in oblivion. The skulls of monarchs and heroes were tossed about like footballs by the profane multitude; like the gravediggers in Hamlet, they made a jest of the lips before which nations had trembled. Nothing could equal the fury with which the populace, in the greater part of France, threw themselves on the monumental remains in the churches. It would seem as if their rage at the dead was even greater than their exasperation at the living. Hardly any monuments of note escaped dilapidation. This devastation was much more complete than in Scotland during the fury of the Reformation; for there the images and monasteries only were destroyed, the graves were not rifled. The monumental remains which had escaped their sacrilegious fury, were subsequently collected by order of the Directory, and placed in a great museum at Paris, in the Rue Petits Augustins, where they long remained piled and heaped together in broken confusion—an emblem of the Revolution, which destroyed in a few years what centuries of glory had erected.²

* Personal
observation.
Doux Amis,
xi. 53.

Having massacred the great of the present, and insulted the illustrious of former ages, nothing remained to the Revolutionists but to direct their vengeance against Heaven

* "Chaque section de Paris, et des communes voisines, se fait un honneur d'aller déposer sur l'autel de la patrie les dépouilles opimes de la superstition; et la Convention ne sait ce qu'elle a le plus à admirer, ou la magnificence des dons, ou le zèle du patriotisme. Tout Paris et les communes voisines sont décatholisées. Qui pourrait compter les immenses richesses du Brunel et de Franciade ci-devant St Denis—tout ce pompeux amas de hochets ridicules qu'avait enfouis dans les églises la stupidité de nos rois."—PRUDHOMME, *Revolutions de Paris*, No. 215, p. 213.

itself. Pache, Hébert, and Chaumette, the leaders of the municipality, publicly expressed their determination "to dethrone the King of Heaven, as well as the monarchs of the earth." To accomplish this design, they prevailed on Gobel, the apostate constitutional Bishop of Paris, to appear at the bar of the Convention, accompanied by some of the clergy of his diocese, and there abjure the Christian faith. That base prelate declared "that no other national religion was now required but that of liberty, equality, and morality."* Many of the constitutional bishops and clergy in the Convention joined in the proposition. The Convention received them with loud applause, and gave them the fraternal kiss. Crowds of drunken artisans and shameless prostitutes crowded to the bar, and trampled under their feet the sacred vases, consecrated for ages to the holiest purposes of religion. The sections of Paris shortly after followed the example of the constitutional clergy, and publicly abjured the Christian religion. The churches were stripped of all their ornaments; their plate and valuable contents brought in heaps to the municipality and the Convention, from whence they were sent to the mint to be melted down. Trampling under foot the images of our Saviour and the Virgin, they elevated, amidst shouts of applause, the busts of Marat and Lepelletier, and danced round them, singing parodies on the Hallelujah, and dancing the Carmagnole. Momoro, the printer, an ardent member of the municipality, then said—"Citizen representatives, you see before you your brothers, who desire to be regenerated, and to become men. You see the bishops of Paris, the grand vicars, and some of the priests, who, conducted by reason, come to lay aside the character which superstition had given them: that great example will be imitated by their colleagues. It is thus that the minions of despotism concur in its destruction:

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

45.

Abjuration
of Christi-
anity by the
Municipali-
ty.
Nov. 7.

* Gobel's abjuration of Christianity was in these terms:—"Aujourd'hui que la Révolution marche à grands pas vers un fin heureux, puisque elle amène toutes les opinions à un seul centre politique; aujourd'hui qu'il ne doit plus y avoir d'autre culte public et national que celui de la liberté et de la sainte égalité, parceque le souverain le veut ainsi; conséquemment à mes principes, je me sou mets à sa volonté, et je viens vous déclarer ici hautement que dès aujourd'hui je renonce à exercer mes fonctions de ministre du culte Catholique. Les citoyens mes vicaire s ici presens se réunissent à moi: en conséquence nous remettons tous nos titres. Puisse cet exemple servir à consolider le règne de la liberté et de l'égalité. Vive la République!—(Signé) GOBEL."

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxx. 185.
186. Th.
v. 429, 430.
Luc. x. 300,
302. Toul
iv. 124.
Deux Amis,
xii. 70, 71.
Nov. 7.

it is thus that soon the French Republic will recognise no other worship but that of liberty, equality, and eternal truth, which, thanks to your immortal labours, will soon become universal." During several weeks, daily abjurations by the constitutional clergy took place at the bar of the Convention. On the 10th November, Siéyes appeared, and abjured like the rest. "I have lived," said he, "the victim of superstition. I will not be its slave. I know no other worship but that of liberty; no other religion but the love of humanity and country."

46.
The Goddess of Reason introduced into the Convention.
Nov. 9.

Shortly after, a still more indecent exhibition took place before the Convention. The celebrated prophecy of Father Beaurégard was accomplished—"Beauty without modesty was seen usurping the place of the Holy of Holies!" Hébert, Chaumette, and their associates, appeared at the bar, and declared that "God did not exist, and that the worship of Reason was to be substituted in his stead." Chaumette said—"Legislative fanaticism has lost its hold; it has given place to reason. Its dark eyes could not bear the light of reason. We have left its temples; they are regenerated. To-day an immense multitude are assembled under its Gothic roofs, which, for the first time, will re-echo the voice of truth. There the French will celebrate their true worship—that of liberty and reason. There we will form new vows for the prosperity of the armies of the Republic; there we will abandon the worship of inanimate idols for that of *Reason*, this animated image, the *chef-d'œuvre* of creation." A veiled female, arrayed in blue drapery, was brought into the Convention; and Chaumette, taking her by the hand—"Mortals," said he, "cease to tremble before the powerless thunders of a God whom your fears have created. Henceforth acknowledge no divinity but Reason. I offer you its noblest and purest image; if you must have idols, sacrifice only to such as this."—Then, letting fall the veil, he exclaimed, "Fall before the august Senate of Freedom, Veil of Reason!" At the same time, the goddess appeared personified by a celebrated beauty, Madame Maillard of the opera, known in more than one character to most of the Convention. The goddess, after being embraced by the president, was mounted on a magnificent car, and conducted, amidst an immense crowd, to the

cathedral of Notre-Dame, to take the place of the Deity. There she was elevated on the high altar, and received the adoration of all present; while a numerous band of elegant young women, all *figurantes* of the opera, her attendants, whose alluring looks already sufficiently indicated their profession, retired into the chapels round the choir, where every species of licentiousness and obscenity was indulged in without control, with hardly any veil from the public gaze. To such a length was this carried, that Robespierre afterwards declared that Chaumette deserved death for the abominations he had permitted on that occasion. Thenceforward that ancient edifice was called the *Temple of Reason*.¹

The municipality, elated by the success of their efforts to overturn the Christian religion, and the countenance they had received in their designs from the National Convention, lost no time in adopting the most decisive measures for its entire extirpation. All the relics preserved in the churches of Paris were ordered to be brought to the commune, and the loudest applause shook the hall, when the section of Quinze-Vingt brought the shirt of Saint Louis, long the object of esteem, to be burned on the altar of Reason. On the 11th November the popular society of the museum entered the hall of the municipality, exclaiming, "Vive la Raison!" and carrying on the top of a pole the half-burnt remains of several books, among others the breviaries, and the *Old and New Testament*, "which have expiated in a great fire," said their president, "all the fooleries which they have made the human race commit." Taking advantage of the enthusiasm which this announcement excited, Hébert proposed and carried a decree for the demolition of the whole of the steeples of Paris, on the ground that they were "repugnant to the principles of equality." On the same day, a decree passed for the destruction of all the sculpture on Notre Dame, excepting that on the two lateral portals, which were to be saved, said Chaumette, "because Dupiers had there traced his planetary system." Finally, on the 23d November, atheism in France reached its extreme point, by a decree of the municipality ordering the immediate closing of all the churches, and placing the whole priests in a state of surveillance.² At the same period they gave deci-

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¹ Hist. de la
Conv. III.
192—196.
Lac. x. 307,
308. Toul.
iv. 124. Th.
v. 431, 432.
Hist. Parl.
xxx. 197,
199. Jour-
nal de Paris,
No. 318.
Duval, Souv.
de la Ter-
reur, iv. 157,
159.

47.

Atheistical
decrees of
the Muni-
cipality of
Paris

Nov. 11.

Nov. 23.

Dec 2.
² Journal
de Paris,
No. 318.
Moniteur.
Hist. Parl.
xxx. 200,
204.

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XIV.

1793.

48.
Universal
abandon-
ment of
religion,
and closing
of the
churches.

sive proof of the bloody use they were to make of their power by ordering lists of all the persons who were suspected, or had, at any time, signed anti-revolutionary petitions, to be sent to the forty-eight sections of Paris, and in some sections they refused passports to them, when desirous of leaving the city.

The services of religion were now universally abandoned. The pulpits were deserted throughout all the revolutionised districts; baptisms ceased; the burial service was no longer heard; the sick received no communion; the dying no consolation. A heavier anathema than that of Papal power pressed upon the peopled realm of France—the anathema of Heaven, inflicted by the madness of her own inhabitants. The village bells were silent; Sunday was obliterated. Infancy entered the world without a blessing; age left it without a hope. In lieu of the services of the church, the licentious fêtes of the new worship were performed by the most abandoned females; it appeared as if the Christian truth had been succeeded by the orgies of the Babylonian priests, or the grossness of the Hindoo theocracy. On every tenth day a revolutionary leader ascended the pulpit, and preached atheism to the bewildered audience; Marat was universally deified, and even the instrument of death sanctified by the name of the “Holy Guillotine.” On all the public cemeteries the inscription was placed, “Death is an Eternal Sleep.” The comedian Monvel, in the church of St Roch, carried impiety to its utmost length. “God! if you exist,” said he, “avenge your injured name. *I bid you defiance*; you remain silent; you dare not launch your thunders; who, after this, will believe in your existence?” It is by slower means, and the operation of general laws, that the decrees of Providence are accomplished. A more convincing proof of divine government than the destruction of the blasphemer was about to be afforded; the annihilation of the guilty by their own hands, and the consequences of the passions which they themselves had unchained. “Deus,” says St Augustin, “patiens, quia æternus.”¹

The most sacred relations of life were at the same period placed on a new footing, suited to the extravagant ideas of the times. Marriage was declared a civil contract, binding only during the pleasure of the contracting parties. Di-

¹ Deux
Amis, xii.
67, 73, 74.
Lac. x. 308.
219, 331.
Toul. iv.
124. Mig.
ii. 299.
Souv. de
la Terreur,
iv. 149.
150.

vice immediately became general; the corruption of manners reached a pitch unknown during the worst days of the monarchy; the vices of the marquesses and countesses of the time of Louis XV. descended to the shopkeepers and artisans of Paris. So indiscriminate did concubinage become, that, by a decree of the Convention, bastards were declared entitled to an equal share of the succession with legitimate children. Mademoiselle Arnout, a celebrated comedian, expressed the public feeling when she called "*Marriage the Sacrament of Adultery*." The divorces in Paris in the first three months of 1793 were 562, while the marriages were only 1785; a proportion probably unexampled among mankind. The consequences soon became apparent. Before the era of the Consulate, one-half of the whole births in Paris were illegitimate; and at this moment, notwithstanding the apparent reformation of manners which has taken place since the Restoration, every third child to be seen in the streets of Paris is a bastard.¹

A decree of the Convention suppressed all the academies, public schools, and colleges, even those of medicine and surgery; their whole revenues were confiscated. Even the academies which had become so celebrated in European history by the illustrious men by whom they had been graced, were involved in the general proscription. The exquisite tapestry of the Gobelines was publicly burned, because the mark of the crown and arms of France was on it. All the sculpture and statuary which could be found on tombs, in churches, palaces, or chateaux, was destroyed, because it savoured of royalty and aristocracy. New schools, on a plan traced out by Condorcet, were directed; but no efficient steps were taken to insure their establishment, and education, for a number of years, almost entirely ceased through all France.* One establishment only, that of the Polytechnic School, takes its date from this melancholy epoch. During the long night, the whole force of the human mind was bent upon the mathematical sciences, which flourished from the concentration of its powers, and were soon illuminated by the most splendid

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

49

General
and exces-
sive disso-
lution of
manners.

¹ Dupin, t.
79. Lac.
x. 332, 333.
Burke, viii.
176. Reg.
Peace.

50.

Confisca-
tion of the
property of
hospitals
and the
poor.
Sept. 7.

* "Dans le Règne de la Terreur, les colleges et écoles étaient absolument abandonnés: les pères et les mères ne songeant qu'à mettre leurs jours en sûreté, étaient occupés seulement de leur propre conservation."—*Deux Amis*, xii. 2.

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XIV.

1793.

¹ Rapport
sur la Men-
dicité, par
Liancourt,
ii. 20. Lac.
x. 322, 323.
Deux
Amis, xii.
24.

light. In the general havoc, even the establishments of charity were not overlooked. The revenues of the hospitals and humane institutions throughout the country, were confiscated by the despots whom the people had seated on the throne; their domains sold as part of the national property. Soon the terrible effects of the suppression of all permanent sources of relief to the destitute became apparent. Mendicity advanced with frightful steps; and the condition of the poor throughout France became such as to call forth the loudest lamentations from the few enlightened philanthropists who still followed the car of the Revolution.¹

51.
Noble firm-
ness of the
Bishop of
Blois.
Nov. 7.

In the midst of this general desertion of the Christian faith by the constitutional clergy, it is consolatory to have, for the honour of human nature, one instance of an opposite character to recount. Gregory, Bishop of Blois, arrived in the Convention: he was pressed to imitate the example of Gobel. He ascended the tribune; and, while the Assembly expected to hear him abjure like the rest, he said—"My attachment to the cause of liberty is well known; I have given multiplied proofs of it. If the present question relates to the revenues of my bishopric, I resign them without regret. If it is a question of religion, that is a matter beyond your jurisdiction, and you have no right to enter upon it. I hear much of fanaticism and superstition. Reflect on what the words mean, and you will see that it is something diametrically opposite to religion. As for myself, Catholic by conviction and sentiment, priest by choice, I have been named by the people to be a bishop; but it is neither from them nor you that I hold my mission. I consented to bear the mitre at a time when it was a crown of thorns: they tormented me to accept it; they torment me now to extort an abdication, which they will not tear from me. Acting on sacred principles which are dear to me, and which I defy you to ravish from me, I have endeavoured to do good in my diocese: I will remain a bishop to do so, and I invoke for my shield the liberty of worship." This courageous speech produced great astonishment in the Convention, and he was denounced at the Jacobins for having wished to "christianise" the Revolution;² but Robespierre, who was in secret averse to these scandalous scenes as likely to discredit it, did not

Nov. 13.
3 Hist.
Parl. xxx.
183, 184.
Journal des
Jacobins.

support the clamour, and he escaped being sent to the guillotine.

Meanwhile the Jacobins were bestowing every imaginable honour on the memory of Marat, who, beyond either Voltaire or Rousseau, became the object of general adoration. His bust was placed in the Convention, and on an altar in the Louvre, with the inscription—"Unable to corrupt, they have assassinated him." He became, literally speaking, an object of worship; great numbers of victims were sacrificed to his memory; and the monster who had incessantly urged the cutting off of two hundred and eighty thousand heads was assimilated to the Saviour of the world. A couplet was composed by a member of the Revolutionary Committee of the section Marat, the burden of which was—"O sacred heart of Jesus! O sacred heart of Marat!" On the 21st September, his apotheosis took place with great pomp. His bust was soon to be seen in every village of France; and, on the 14th November, a decree of the Convention, proceeding on a report of the younger Chenier, was passed, directing his ashes to be transferred to the Pantheon, where they were accordingly deposited with great pomp not long afterwards, in the room of the remains of Mirabeau, which were thrown out. Many months had not elapsed before Chenier's brother, the celebrated poet, became the victim of Marat's principles.¹

But amidst this extraordinary mixture of republican transports and individual baseness, the great measures of the Revolution were steadily advancing, and producing effects of incalculable moment, and lasting effect, on the fortunes of France. Three of paramount importance took place during the course of the year 1793, and produced consequences which will be felt by the latest generation in that country. These were the immense levies, first of three hundred thousand, then of twelve hundred thousand men, which took place in the course of that year; the confiscation of two-thirds of the landed property in the kingdom, which arose from the decrees of the Convention against the emigrants, clergy, and persons convicted at the Revolutionary Tribunals; and the unbounded issue of assignats on the security of the national domains. These great measures, which no government could have attempted but during the fervour of a revolution, mutu-

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

52.

Apotheosis
of Marat.
Nov. 14.

¹ Biog. Univ.
xxvi. 564,
565.

53.
Vast public
measures of
the Conven-
tion.

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

¹ Rapport
de Cam-
bon, May 16.
Moniteur,
18th May,
p. 973.
Toul. v.
194. Th.
vii. 239.

54.
Its enor-
mous ex-
penditure.

ally, though for a brief period, upheld each other; and perpetuated the revolutionary system by the important interests which were made to depend on its continuance. The immense levy of soldiers drew off almost all the ardent and energetic spirits, and not only furnished bread to the multitudes whom the closing of all pacific employments had deprived of subsistence, but let off in immense channels the inflamed and diseased blood of the nation; the confiscation of the land placed funds worth above £700,000,000 sterling at the disposal of the government, which they were enabled to squander with boundless profusion in the maintenance of the revolutionary *régime* at home, and the contest with its enemies abroad; the extraordinary issue of paper, to the amount ultimately of £350,000,000, always enabled the Treasury to liquidate its demands, and interested every holder of property in the kingdom in the support of the national domains, the only security on which it rested. During the unparalleled and almost demoniac energy produced by the sudden operation of these powerful causes, France was unconquerable; and it was their combined operation which brought it triumphant through that violent and unprecedented crisis.¹

Europe has had too much reason to become acquainted with the military power developed by France during this eventful period; but the civil force, exerted by the dictators within their own dominions, though less generally known, was perhaps still more remarkable. Forty-eight thousand revolutionary committees were soon established in the Republic, being one in each commune, and embracing above 500,000 members, all the most resolute and determined of the Jacobin party. Each of these individuals received three francs a-day as his wages for seeking out victims for arrest and the scaffold; and the annual charge for them was 591,000,000 francs, or £24,000,000 sterling. Between the military defenders and civil servants of the government, almost all the active and resolute men in France, and the whole of the depraved and abandoned ones, were in the pay of the dictators, and the whole starving energy of the country fed on the spoils of its defenceless opulence. A terrible system, drawing after it the total dissolution of society; capable of being executed

only by the most audacious wickedness ; but never likely, when it is attempted, of failing, for a time at least, of success. This system produced astonishing effects for a limited period, just as an individual who, in a few years, squanders a great fortune, outshines all those who live wholly on the fruits of their industry. But the inevitable period of weakness soon arrives ; the maniac who exerts his demoniac strength, cannot in the end withstand the steady efforts of intelligence. The career of extravagance is in general short ; bankruptcy arrests alike the waste of improvidence, and the splendour which attends it.¹

Cambon, the minister of finance, in August 1793, made an important and astonishing revelation of the length to which the emission of assignats had been carried under the Reign of Terror. The national expenses had exceeded three hundred millions of francs, or above £12,000,000 a-month ; the receipts of the treasury during the disorder which prevailed, never exceeded a fourth part of that sum ; and there was no mode of supplying the deficiency but by an incessant issue of paper money. The quantity in circulation on the 15th August 1793, amounted to 3,775,846,033 livres, or £135,000,000 ; the quantity issued since the commencement of the Revolution had been no less than 5,100,000,000 francs, or £204,000,000 sterling. This system continued during the whole Reign of Terror, and produced a total confusion of property of every sort. All the persons employed by government, both in the civil and military departments, were paid in the paper currency at par ; but as it rapidly fell, from the enormous quantity in circulation, to a tenth part, and soon a twentieth of its real value, the pay received was merely nominal, and those in the receipt of the largest apparent incomes were in want of the common necessities of life. Pichegru, at the head of the army of the north, with a nominal pay of four thousand francs a-month, was in the actual receipt on the Rhine, in 1795, of only two hundred francs, or £8 sterling in gold or silver—a smaller sum than the pay of an English lieutenant : and Hoche, the commander of 100,000 men, the army of La Vendée, besought the government to send him a horse, as he was unable to purchase one, and the military requisitions had exhausted all those in the country where he commanded.² If such was

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

¹ Chateaub.
Etud. Hist.
i. Pref.
97, 98.
Hist. Parl.
xxix. 45, 46.

55.
Prodigious
issue of as-
signats. Its
effects.

² Rapport
par Cam-
bon, Aug.
15. Th. viii.
103, 115,
446. Hist.
Parl. xxi.
445.

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XIV.

1793.

the condition of the superior, it may be imagined what was the situation of the inferior officers and private soldiers ; while in their own country, they were literally starving, and the necessity of conquest was felt as strongly, to enable them to live on the spoils of their enemies, as to avert the sword of desolation from the frontiers of France.

56.
Their rapid
depreciation.

This constant and increasing depreciation of the assignats, produced its natural and unavoidable effect in an unprecedented enhancement of the price of provisions and all the articles of human consumption. The assignats were not absorbed in the purchase of the national domains, because the holders were distrustful of the security of the revolutionary title, which they could alone receive ; and as their issue continued at the rate of £10,000,000 sterling a-month, of course the market became gorged, and the value of these securities rapidly declined. Though this depreciation was unavoidable, the Convention endeavoured to arrest it, and enacted the punishment of six years in irons against any who should exchange any quantity of silver or gold for a greater nominal value of assignats ; or should ask a larger price for any articles of merchandise, if the price was paid in paper, than if paid in the precious metals. It is needless to say that this forced attempt to sustain the value of the assignats proved totally nugatory ; and the consequences soon became fatal to many classes of persons. Debtors of every description hastened to discharge their obligations ; and the creditors, compelled to accept paper at par, which was not worth a fifth or tenth, at last not a hundredth, of its nominal value, were defrauded of the greater part of their property. The working classes, whose wages, in consequence of the total destruction of credit, general decline of consumption, and universal stagnation of industry, had by no means risen in proportion to this fall in the value of the assignats, found themselves miserably off for the necessaries of life ; while the farmers, raising the price of their provisions in proportion to the fall in the value of paper, soon elevated them beyond the reach of the labouring poor. This state of things, so opposite to what they had been led to expect as the result of a revolution, excited the most vehement discontent among the working classes ;¹ they ascribed it all, as is always the case, to the efforts of aristocrats and

¹ Deux
Amis, x.
282, 284.
Th. v. 147,
149.

forestallers, and demanded with loud cries that they should be led out to the guillotine.

It became then absolutely necessary to have recourse to a *maximum*: powerful as the Committee of Public Salvation was, a longer continuance of the public discontents would have endangered its existence. Corn, indeed, was not wanting; but the farmers, dreading the tumult and violence of the markets, and unwilling to part with their produce at the nominal value of the assignats, refused to bring it to the towns. To such a pitch did this evil arise in the beginning of May 1793, that the Convention was forced to issue a decree, compelling the farmers and grain-merchants to declare what stock they had in their possession, and to bring it to the public markets at a price fixed by each commune. Domiciliary visits were authorised, to inspect the stock of each holder of grain, and false returns were punished by a forfeiture of the whole. In addition to this, the distribution of bread by the bakers was provided for in the most minute manner; no one could obtain it without producing a *carte de sureté*, issued by the Revolutionary committees; and on that *carte* was inscribed the number of his family, and the quantity to be delivered to each member. Finally, to put an end to the scandalous scenes which generally took place at the bakers' doors, it was enacted that each bread shop should have a *rope attached to it*; each person, as he arrived, was obliged to take it in his hand, and remain quietly there till all before him were served. But in the struggles of discontent and famine, the cord was frequently broken, fierce conflicts ensued, and nothing but a prompt interposition of military force was able to restore tranquillity. To such minute and vexatious regulations are governments reduced when they once violate the freedom of human action; and to such a load of fetters do the people in the end subject themselves when they give way to the insane passion for democratic power.¹

All the other articles of subsistence as well as corn speedily rose with the increased issue of the assignats, and the people persisted in ascribing to forestallers the natural consequences of a depreciated circulation. Frightful tumults arose; the boats which descended the Seine with groceries, fruits, and wood, were seized and plundered. Terrified at

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XIV.

1793.

57.
Origin of
the law of
the maxi-
mum on
prices.

May 4.

¹ Th. v. 151.
Decree, May
4. Moni-
teur, May 5,
p. 551. Th.
v. 151.

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

55.

Great in-
crease of
disorders
and gamb-
ling from
the rapid
change of
prices.

1 Decree,
July 26.
Moniteur,
July 27.
Th. v. 152.

59
General dis-
solution of
manners.

the continual recurrence of these disorders, the capitalists declined investing their money in purchases of any sort; and the shares in foreign mercantile companies rose rapidly from the increased demand for them, as the only investment affording a tolerable degree of security: another striking proof of the consequences of the disorders consequent on popular ambition, and their tendency to turn from the people the reservoirs by which their industry is maintained. During the perils and chances of a revolution, the tendency to gambling of every sort prodigiously increased. Men who had the sword of Damocles continually suspended over their heads, sought to make the most of the numerous chances of making money, which the rapid issue and fall of the assignats, and the boundless profusion of articles of luxury brought into the market by the ruin of their owners, naturally occasioned. So enormous did these evils become, that on 26th July 1793, the forestalling of provisions was declared a capital crime, and the penalty of death was in like manner extended to all those who retained articles of subsistence without bringing them to daily sale, or who did not, within eight days from the publication of the decree, make a declaration to the municipal officers of his district, of the amount of provisions, including wine and oil, he had on hand, with a specification of the proportions in which he was going to bring them to market.¹

The bourse of Paris was crowded with bankers, revolutionists, ci-devant priests, ruined nobles, and adventurers of every description, who sometimes made enormous gains, and passed a life of debauchery with actresses, opera-dancers, and abandoned women of every description, whom the dissolution of society had brought in contact with those who had risen for the moment on the wheels of fortune. Such was the universal dissolution of manners, arising from the dread of popular jealousy, that almost all the members of the Convention lived publicly with mistresses, who became possessed of much of their influence in the state. To have done otherwise would have exposed them to the blasting suspicion of being Christians and Royalists. This prevailing profligacy of manners appeared in the most striking manner, in the great number of divorces which took place during this calamitous period of French history. They were owing, partly to marriage

being now declared a civil contract, which might be dissolved at any time at the pleasure of the contracting parties; partly to their religion and lax morality of the age; and partly to the dreadful uncertainty of life, and the thirst for immediate enjoyment, which had seized all classes from that uncertainty. From these combined causes, the morality of the age, as measured by the relations of the sexes, sank lower in revolutionary France than it had ever been in modern Europe; and the number of divorces* in the first burst of social regeneration, exceeded what had been known in Rome under the despotism of the Cæsars.¹

Nor was the state of the prisons in Paris and over France a less extraordinary and memorable monument of the Reign of Terror. When the Girondists were overthrown, on the 31st May 1793, the number of prisoners in the different jails of Paris was about 1150; but before three months of the Reign of Terror had elapsed their number was doubled, and it gradually rose to an average of six, seven, and at last eight thousand, constantly in captivity in the metropolis alone. The whole prisons in the metropolis being filled by this prodigious crowd, the castle of Vincennes was surveyed with a view to additional accommodation, and the Jacobins boasted it could contain six or seven thousand more.† The official bulletins, published weekly, of the number of prisoners in the jails of Paris, is one of the most interesting monuments of the Revolution, and Leveaux's *Journal de la Montagne*, the Jacobin organ of Paris, set up on the 2d June 1793, has at least done one service to humanity by having preserved the dismal record. It is equalled only by the catalogue of the executions,

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Th. v. 152,
161. Hist.
de la Conv.
iv. 81, 82.

60.
Official account of the number of prisoners in Paris during the Reign of Terror.

* The following Table, one of the most curious monuments of the Revolution, compiled from the *Moniteur* of the dates under mentioned, shows the marriages and divorces in Paris during part of the Reign of Terror:—

1793.	Marriages.	Divorces.	Births.	Deaths.	Moniteur.
May.	658	211	1724	2039	11th June.
June.	580	183	1635	1667	4th Aug.
July.	639	218	1767	1512	Do.
Sept. 13.	24	9	42	64	Sept. 15.
Oct. 16.	8	6	46	67	Oct. 18.
1794.					
Feb.	890	190	1754	2174	March 26.

The marriages and divorces, or "état civil," as it is called, are published very irregularly in the *Moniteur*.

† "Couvrez à Vincennes. L'on pourrait y loger six à sept mille détenus."
—Note de PAVAN; *Papiers trouvés chez ROUBAEPierre*, ii. 403.

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1793.

which, long averaging from seven to ten, at length rose to forty and fifty, and, on the fall of Robespierre, had at times reached *eighty* a-day.* Apply these numbers to the remainder of France, which, considering the enormous accumulation of prisoners at Lyons, Toulon, and La Vendée, and the revolutionary tribunals at work in almost every considerable town, especially Nantes, Toulon, Bordeaux, Lyons, Strasburg, and Arras, seems not beyond the bounds of probability, and call the population of Paris 650,000, or about a fortieth part of the whole population of France, which at that period contained about 26,000,000 souls,—and we shall arrive at the result, that at the commencement of the Reign of Terror, the persons in jail, almost all for political offences, was over all France forty-five thousand, and in its latter stages had risen to *three hundred thousand*, of whom, for a month before the fall of Robespierre, from *two to three thousand* were daily put to death

* Note:—

Date.	Number of Prisoners in Paris.	AUTHORITIES.	Vol.	No.	Page.
June 1, 1793	1182	JOURNAL de la MONTAGNE,	I.	—	—
August 27, ...	1601	... ..	..	88	610
Septem. 8, ...	1794	... ..	..	100	695
... 16, ...	2041	... ..	..	108	760
October 5, ...	2378	... ..	..	125	896
... 23, ...	2894	... ..	III.	136	984
Novem. 17, ...	3235	... ..	..	158	1072
Decem. 14, ...	3499	... ..	..	21	161
... 21, ...	4161	... ..	..	28	219
... 24, ...	4325	... ..	..	31	245
January 4, 1794	4595	... ..	..	42	339
... 10, ...	4605	... ..	..	47	374
... 23, ...	5031	... ..	..	65	517
Febru. 10, ...	5328	... ..	..	77	612
... 21, ...	5569	... ..	..	98	779
March 1, ...	5821	... ..	..	103	821
... 10, ...	5991	... ..	..	116	897
... 23, ...	6104	... ..	..	120	952
April 1, ...	7400	... ..	..	150	1272
... 15, ...	7541	... ..	IV.	8	61
... 18, ...	7541	... ..	..	18	141
... 24, ...	7674	MONITEUR, April 27.	..	26	203
May 24, ...	8241 †	JOURNAL de la MONTAGNE,	..	34	585
June 1, ...	7084	... ..	..	—	—
July 8, ...	7502	... ..	..	—	—
... 27, ...	7915	MONITEUR, Aug. 30	..	—	—

† Including those in the Conciergerie.

Immense as these numbers are, we have the authority of an unexceptionable witness for the fact, that, during the last five months of the period,

by the guillotine;—at least a hundred times the number of prisoners, and a thousand times the number of executions, which, since the atrocious era of the revocation of the edict of Nantes, had disgraced the worst period of the monarchy.

The forced requisitions of horses, ammunition, provisions, and stores of every sort from the people, soon proved the source of infinite and most vexatious burdens. In August 1793, eighteen commissioners were nominated by the Convention, with powers to require from the primary assemblies in every part of France, unlimited supplies of men, horses, provisions, and ammunition. The principle founded on was, that the men and animals indispensable for the purposes of agriculture, should alone be preserved, and that all the remainder might be seized for the purposes of the republic. All the horses of draught and burden, not absolutely required by the cultivators or manufacturers, were seized for the state; all the arms of every description appropriated by the government commissioners; the great hotels of the emigrants confiscated to the use of the state, and converted into vast workshops for the manufacture of arms, clothing, or equipment for the armies, or magazines for the storing of subsistence for the use of the people. The principal manufactory of arms was established at Paris, and the whole workmen in iron and jewellery pressed into its service. It soon became capable of sending forth a thousand muskets a-day. To such a length did the dictators carry their principle of managing every thing of their own authority, that they compelled a return of the whole subsistence in every part of the country, and endeavoured to purchase it all, and distribute it either to the armies, or at a low price to the imperious citizens of the towns. This

they were in reality at least 1000 greater every week than these returns exhibit.—*Deposition de LECOINTRE; Procès de FOUQUIER TINVILLE, No. XV.*—One reason of this was, that from the date of the decree in June 1794, directing state prisoners from the departments in many cases to be forwarded to Paris, the prisoners in the Conciergerie, one of the largest jails in that city to which these foreign detachments were sent, were not included in the returns, and so several of them are imperfect.

How applicable to Paris at this period are the lines of Corneille:—

“ Le séjour de votre potentat,
Qui n'a que ses fureurs pour maxims d'état,
Je n'appelle plus Rome—un enclos de murailles
Que ces proscriptions combient de funérailles;
Ces murs dont le destin fut autrefois si beau
N'en sont que la prison, ou plutôt le tombeau.”

Sertorius, Act III. scene 2.

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XIV

1793.

61.
Forced re-
quisitions of
grain,
horses, and
carriages.
August 16
and 17.

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

1 Decree,
Aug. 16 and
17. Moni-
teur, Aug.
18. Hist.
Parl. xxi.
463, 464.
Th. v. 141,
188. Hist.
de la Conv.
iii. 237, 245.

system of forced requisitions gave the government the command of a large proportion of the agricultural produce of the kingdom, and it was enforced with merciless severity. Not only grain, but horses, carriages, and conveyances of every sort, were forcibly taken from the cultivators; and as the payment they received was wholly in assignats, it in truth amounted to nothing. These exactions excited the most violent discontent, but no one ventured to give it vent; to have expressed dissatisfaction, would immediately have led to denunciation at the nearest Revolutionary committee, and put the complainer in imminent hazard of his life. To complete the burden, the democratic power, incessant clamour, and destitute situation of the people in the great towns, rendered it indispensable to adopt some general measures for their relief; and the only method which was found effectual, was to put the great cities on the same footing with the armies, and give the agents of government the right of making forced requisitions for their support.¹

62.
Public robbery for the support of the populace of the cities.

The maintenance of such immense bodies of men as the idle Revolutionists in the great cities composed, ere-long came to be of itself equal to the whole administration of an ordinary government. A board was appointed of five directors, who soon had ten thousand persons in their daily pay, incessantly occupied in enforcing these requisitions for the support of the great cities. That of Paris was of itself an army. No less than 636,000 persons daily received rations at the public offices, amounting to eighteen hundred and ninety-seven sacks of meal; and the attention of government was incessantly directed towards keeping the citizens in good-humour by regularity in their distribution. The losses sustained by the agriculturists in providing for this daily consumption were enormous; the cost of producing their grain had augmented tenfold by the depreciation of paper, and yet they were only paid the former price by the requisitionists. The farmers were obliged to pay ten francs a-day to their labourers, instead of one franc, as in 1790, and every thing else in the same proportion; yet they were compelled to part with their grain at the price fixed by the *maximum*, which was calculated on the scale of prices before the Revolution, to the imperious and needy multitudes in the towns. In other words, nine-

tenths of the subsistence daily consumed in Paris was extorted *without payment* from the cultivators in the country, and the cries of the sufferers were stifled by the prospect of the guillotine ; a striking instance of the grinding oppression exercised even over their own class by the sovereign people when they once obtain the ascendancy, and the state of subjection to which, in the progress of revolutions, the inhabitants of the country invariably fall to the citizens of towns.¹

The necessity of feeding the multitude entailed other expenses of a more serious kind on the Convention, and occasioned a large part of their never-ending financial embarrassments. Government bought grain from foreigners for twenty-one francs the quintal, and retailed it to the populace for fourteen ; the cessation of agricultural labour in a great part of the country rendered it indispensable to carry on this ruinous commerce to a great extent, and the losses thence accruing to the state were stated by Cambon as enormous. The expense of feeding the inhabitants of Paris, soon nearly equalled that of the maintenance of its fourteen armies. The Convention introduced the ruinous system of distributing every day, to every citizen of the capital, as the only means of keeping them quiet, a pound of bread, at the price of three sous in assignats ; a burden which, from the fall in the value of paper, soon became almost as great as that of supporting them altogether. As provisions, in consequence of these prodigious efforts made in favour of the metropolis, were far cheaper there than in the surrounding districts, smuggling from the one to the other went on to a vast extent, and continual complaints were made of the great fortunes which the rich were making by exporting quantities of bread out of the metropolis. At the commencement of the Reign of Terror, the government adopted the plan of a forced loan from the opulent classes. This tax was imposed on an ascending scale, increasing according to the fortunes of the individuals ; and out of an income of 50,000 francs, or about £2000 a-year, they took, in 1792, 36,000 francs, or £1600. This immense burden was calculated as likely to produce at once a milliard of francs, or £40,000,000 sterling ; and, as a security for this advance, the persons taxed received assignats ; or were inscribed as public creditors on the *grande*

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1793.

¹ *Moniteur*,
Oct. 14, 1793.
Th. vii. 233,
237. *Hist.*
de la Conv.
iii. 180, 240.

83.

The immense bur-
den it entailed
on the
State, and
forced loans
from the
opulent
classes.

² *Hist. Parl.*
xxviii. 451,
452. *Hist.*
de la Conv.
iii. 250, 300,
Th. vii. 137,
203. *Lac.*
xi. 142.

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XIV.

1793.

64.
Confusion of
the old and
Revolution-
ary debt.

Aug. 15.

livre of the French funds—a security, in either case, depending entirely on the success of the Revolution, and which proved in the end almost elusory.

The public creditors of every description continued to be paid in assignats at par, notwithstanding their having fallen to a tenth of their nominal value; in other words, they received only a tenth part of what was really due to them. To perpetuate still further the dependance of the monied classes on the fortunes of the Revolution, the plan was projected by Cambon, and adopted by the Convention, of compelling all holders of stock to surrender to government their titles to it, and in lieu of every other written right, they were merely inscribed on the *grande livre* of the French debt; and an extract of that inscription constituted thereafter the sole title of the proprietor. Most severe laws were enacted to compel the surrender of the older titles to the stock, which were immediately burned, and if a year elapsed without this being done, the capital was forfeited. All the capital sums owing by the state were converted into perpetual annuities, at the rate of five per cent; so that a stock of 1000 francs was inscribed in the book for a perpetual annuity of fifty francs, and government for ever relieved of the burden of discharging the principal sums. "In this manner," said Cambon, "the debt contracted by despotism becomes indistinguishable from that contracted since the Revolution; and I defy despotic power, should it ever revive, to distinguish its ancient creditors from those of the new régime. As soon as this operation is completed, you will see the capitalist who now desires the restoration of a King, because he has a king for a debtor, and who fears that he will lose his fortune if he is not re-established, desire equally vehemently the preservation of the Republic, when his private interests are irrecoverably wound up in its preservation." The whole creditors, both royal and republican, were paid only in assignats, which progressively fell to a fifth, a tenth, a hundredth, and at last, in 1797, to a two hundred and fiftieth part of their nominal value; so that in the space of a few years the payment was entirely elusory, and a national bankruptcy had in fact existed many years before it was formally declared by the Directory.¹

¹ Cambon. Rapport sur le Grand Livre, Aug. 15. Hist. Parl. xxxi. 446, 459. Th. v. 147, 191, 193. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 290, 319.

All the measures of government, however, how vigorous

and despotic soever, proved inadequate to sustain the falling value of the assignats, or keep down the money price of provisions, or articles of daily consumption, which necessarily rose with such prodigious additions to the circulating medium. To effect the object, they had recourse to new and still more oppressive regulations. To destroy the competition of rival companies, which prevented the direction of capital towards the purchase of the national domains, they abolished, by decree, all life insurance societies, and all companies of every description of which the shares were transferable from hand to hand; they declared traitors to their country all those who placed their funds in any investments in countries with which the republic was at war; and condemned to twenty years in irons every person convicted of refusing payment of any debt in assignats, or being concerned in any transaction in which they were received at less than their nominal value. Any person convicted of buying or selling assignats was to be punished with death, by a decree of 5th September. They ordered that the bells of the churches should every where be melted down into sou-pieces, to answer the immediate wants of the peasantry; and passed a second decree, which ranked forestalling with capital crimes. By this last law, it was declared that every one was to be considered as a forestaller, who withdrew from circulation merchandise of primary necessity, without immediately exposing it to public sale. The articles which had been previously declared to be of primary necessity, were bread, wine, butchers-meat, grain, oats, vegetables, fruits, coal, wood, butter, cheese, linen, cotton stuffs, and dress of every description except silks. For all these articles a tariff of prices was fixed, far below what they could be purchased for or produced by the retail dealers, manufacturers, or farmers. To carry into execution this iniquitous decree, the most inquisitorial powers were conferred on the commissaries named by the commune. Every merchant was obliged, at their summons, to give a statement of the goods contained in his warehouses; these declarations were liable to be checked at any hour by domiciliary visits; and any fraud or concealment was declared punishable with death. Commissioners appointed by the communes, were authorised to fix the price at which all these articles were to be

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XIV.

1793.

65.

Continued fall of the assignats. Severe laws against forestallers and all public companies. 5th Sept.

Sept. 29.

Sept. 20.

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

¹ Decree,
Sept. 29.
Hist. Parl.
xxix. 12, 15,
and 42.
Th. v. 204,
207.

66.
Direful
effects of
these laws.

sold ; and if the necessary cost of the manufacture was such as to render the price beyond the reach of the people, they were still to be exposed to sale, at such a reduced price as might bring them within their means. An atrocious edict, pressing with unparalleled severity upon the industrious classes, merely to gratify the needy and clamorous multitude in towns, on whom the government depended, and which, if it had subsisted long in force, would have destroyed all the industry of France, and handed over the people to the unmitigated horrors of actual famine.¹

These extravagant measures had not been many months in operation, before they produced the most disastrous effects. A great proportion of the shops in Paris and all the principal towns, were shut ; business of every sort was at a stand ; the laws of the *maximum*, and against forestallers, had spread terror and distrust as much among the middle classes, who had commenced the Revolution, as the guillotine had among the nobles and priests, who had been its earliest victims. The retail dealers, who had purchased the articles in which they dealt from wholesale merchants before the *maximum*, at a price higher than that allowed by the new tariff, were compelled, by the terror of death, to sell at a loss to themselves, and saw their fortunes gradually melting away in their daily transactions. Even those who had laid in their stock after the imposition of the *maximum*, were in no better situation, for that regulation had only fixed their price when retailed to the public ; but as it had not fixed the price at which the previous manufacture was to be accomplished, nor the necessary transport and storing it in their warehouses effected, and as their operations were necessarily paid in proportion to the depreciated value of the currency, the subsequent sale at the prices fixed by the *maximum* entailed ruinous losses on the tradesmen. The consequence was, that the greater part of the shops were every where closed, and those who continued to do business, did so only by fraud ; the worst articles alone were exposed to public sale at the legal price, and the best reserved for those who were willing in secret to pay their real value. A sepulchral silence reigned in the once gay and joyous capital. In many streets hardly a shop was open ; not a light was to be seen in the windows at night ;² and the doors were all

² Deux
Amis, xii.
146, 147.
Th. v. 399,
400.

barricaded, to give the inhabitants the means of escape by the back windows, if the commissaries of the Convention came to their doors.*

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XIV.

1793.

The people, who perceived these frauds, and witnessed the closing of so great a number of shops, were transported with fury, and besieged the Convention with the most violent petitions, insisting that the dealers should be compelled to reopen their shops, and continue to sell as usual, in spite of any loss they might sustain. They denounced the butchers, who were accused of selling unwholesome meat; the bakers, who furnished coarse bread for the poor, and fine for the rich; the wine-merchants, who diluted their liquors by the most noxious drugs; the salt-merchants, the grocers, the confectioners, who conspired together to adulterate the articles in which they dealt in a thousand different ways. Chaumette, the procureur-general, supported their demands in a violent speech. "We sympathise," said he, "with the evils of the people, because we are the people ourselves; the whole council is composed of Sans Culottes; it is the sovereign multitude. We care not though our heads fall, provided posterity will deign to collect our skulls. It is not the Gospel which I invoke—it is Plato. He that strikes with the sword should be struck with the sword; he that strikes with poison should be struck with poison; he that famishes the people should die of famine. If subsistence and articles of merchandise are wanting, from whom shall the people seize them? From the Convention? No. From the constituted authorities? No. They will take them from the shopkeepers and merchants. It is arms, and not gold, which are wanted to set in motion our manufactories; the world must know that the giant people can crush all its mercantile speculations. Rousseau has said, *when the people have nothing else to eat, they will eat the rich.*"¹

67.
Excessive
violence of
the people
from the rise
of prices.

Sept. 4 and
10.

¹ Parl. xxix.
26, 32. Th.
v. 403.
Hist. de la
Conv. iii.
409, 437.

Intimidated by such formidable petitioners, the Convention and the Municipality adopted still more rigorous measures. Hitherto they had only fixed the price of

* "Au lieu de cette tumulte, de cette vie animée, de cet éclat imposant, qui autrefois distinguait Paris, un silence sépulchral règne dans tous les quartiers; toutes les boutiques sont déjà fermées, chacun s'empresse de se barricader chez soi; et l'on dirait que le crêpe de la mort est étendue sur tout ce qui respire."—*Voyage de 48 heures en Paris dans le mois de Septembre 1793*; given in *Deux Amis*, xii. 146, 147.

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

68.

Renewed
measures of
severity by
the Municipality
and the Convention.

Sept. 5.

¹ Decree,
29th Sept.
Hist. Parl.
xxix. p. 12,
13. Th. v.
404, 406.

articles of necessity in a manufactured state, now they resolved to fix the price of the raw material; and the idea was even entertained of seizing the material and the workmen alike for the service of the state, and converting all France into one vast manufactory in the employment of government. The communes declared that every merchant who had been engaged in business for above a year, who either abandoned or diminished it, should be sent to prison as a suspected person; the prices which the merchant could exact from the retailer, and the retailer from the customer, were minutely fixed; the Revolutionary committees were alone permitted to issue tickets, authorising purchases of any sort; one species of bread, of coarse quality, was only allowed to be baked; and to prevent the scandalous scenes which daily occurred at the bakers' shops, where a number of the poor passed a part of the night with the cord in their hands, it was enacted that the distribution should commence with the last arrived; a regulation which only changed the direction of the tumult.* These regulations were speedily adopted from the municipality of Paris over all France. Soon after, the Convention adopted the still more hazardous step of fixing the prime cost of all articles of rude produce. The price was fixed on the basis of the prices of 1790, augmented by certain fixed rates for the profit of the different hands through which they passed, before reaching the consumer. To carry into execution the numerous regulations on this subject, a commission of subsistence and provisioning was appointed, with absolute powers, extending over all France; it was charged with the execution of the tariffs, with the superintendence of the conduct of the municipalities in that particular; with continually receiving statements of the quantity of subsistence in the country, and the places where it existed; with transporting it from one quarter to another, and providing for the subsistence of the armies, and the furnishing them with the means of transport.¹

Speculation of every sort, even the gambling of the

* "Je demande que pour faire cesser les attroupemens à la porte des boulangers, enfin pour que les mères de familles puissent être débarrassées de tant d'oppression où elles sont depuis longtems, en allant chercher leur pain dès les quatre heures du matin; que la municipalité de Paris fasse informer un tableau à douze colonnes pour tous les mois de l'année, au bas duquel il y aura un certificat qui attestera la quantité de pain à délivrer au porteur."—*Paroles de GUEROULT; Débats des Jacobins, 30 Oct. 1793.*

Bourse, was towards the close of the Reign of Terror almost at an end. The bankers and merchants, accused on all sides of elevating prices, and seeing some of their number daily led out to the scaffold, deserted the Exchange, and sought for an asylum in the solitude of their homes. Industry and activity entirely ceased—every one, intent only on self-preservation, and fearful of endangering life if he was thought to be making money, remained in sullen inactivity, either enduring or affecting poverty. The aspect of France was that of universal destitution. One would have thought that the whole wealth, which centuries of industry had accumulated, had suddenly been swallowed up. The company of the Indies, the last existing mercantile establishment, was abolished; government resolved to have no investment for capital but the purchase of the national domains.¹

Nor was it only on the opulent classes that the revolutionary enactments pressed with severity; they were equally oppressive to the poorest. Never, in truth, were the labouring poor subjected to so many and such vexatious restraints, or obedience to them enforced by such numerous and sanguinary punishments. No one ventured to indulge in any luxury, or abandon himself to any gratification; metallic currency had almost disappeared, and the poor received their wages merely in paper assignats, with which they were unable to purchase the necessities of life, from the enormous extent of their depreciation. Liable to the guillotine if they either sold above the maximum, or refused to take the assignats at their legal and forced value, ten times their intrinsic worth, the dealers had no resource but to close their shops, and become mendicants like their customers, at the offices where provisions were distributed. If they were shopkeepers, they were compelled to sell at a fictitious price; if they were purchasers, they were under the necessity of buying the most wretched articles, because the best were withdrawn by the effect of the forced sales enjoined by government. Only one kind of bread, of the blackest and coarsest kind, was to be had, and that could be obtained in no other way but by receiving tickets from the Revolutionary committees, and waiting half the night, or for hours during the day, at the doors of the bakers, with a rope in their hands.² The

CHAP.
XIV.

1793.

69.
Grinding
oppression
on indus-
trious
classes.

¹ Deux
Amis, xii.
147, 149.
Th. v. 409,
410.

70.
And on the
poor.

² Decree de
la Commune
de Paris,
25th Dec.
1793. Deux
Amis, xii.
177—185,
and Hist.
Parl. xxxi.
47. Th. v.
435.

CHAP. names of the weights and measures, of the days and
XIV. months, were changed; the labouring poor had only three
Sundays in the month instead of four; the consolations
1794. of religion, the worship of the Deity, were at an end.

71.
Their des-
titute and
deplorable
condition.

March 5,
1794.

Feb. 15.

1 Hist. Parl.
xxxii. 459.
Th. vi 146,
151.

All the efforts of the Committee of Public Salvation, after some time, became insufficient to procure an adequate supply of subsistence. Commerce escaped the ruinous law of the *maximum*, and it escaped it in the most disastrous of all ways, by a total cessation. Want of the severest kind was experienced in every branch of human consumption; the ordinary supplies of butcher-meat failed, and as it could still be publicly sold only at the *maximum*, the butchers exposed only the most unwholesome kind of food, and reserved that of the better sort for clandestine sale.* The evil soon extended to other articles; vegetables, fruits, eggs, butter, and fish, disappeared from the markets. Bands of persons travelled far on the high-roads, and met them as they were approaching Paris, where they were clandestinely purchased at prices far above the *maximum*, for the use of the opulent classes. The people were animated with the most violent indignation at these practices, and, to put a stop to them, the commune enacted that no butchers should be permitted to go out to meet the cattle on their way to the markets; that no meat should be bought or sold but at the established stalls; and that no crowd should be allowed to collect round the bakers' doors before six in the morning, instead of three, the time when they usually began to assemble. These regulations, like all the others, failed of effect; the crowds were just as great and as clamorous round the bakers' shops as before: violent tumults constantly arose among those who had got possession of the ropes at their doors; and, as a last resource, the government was preparing to lay out the gardens of the Tuileries, of the Luxembourg, and of all the opulent persons round Paris, in the cultivation of garden stuffs.¹

At length the evils arising from the *maximum* became

* "Mais vous, hommes insensibles, qu'on appelle bouchers, vous devez les perfides instrumens des contrerévolutionnaires. Le pauvre qui se présente chez vous, rejeté, humilié, n'en emporte que des os de rebut; tandis que le riche qui se rit des souffrances d'autres est accueilli avec une politesse recherchée, trouve la plus belle tranche, les morceaux les plus délicats, parce qu'il paye."—*Proclamation du Comité de Surveillance de Paris*, 5th March 1794; *Hist. Parl.* xxxii. 4, 5.

so excessive, that the inhabitants of Paris were obliged to be put on a limited allowance of animal food. The commission for provisions fixed the daily consumption at 75 oxen, 150 quintals of mutton and veal, and 200 hogs. All the animals intended for the consumption of the metropolis, were brought to a public market-place, where alone meat was allowed to be sold; and the butchers were only allowed to deliver every-five days half a pound of meat to each family for each head. The same *cartes de sûreté* were issued by the Revolutionary committees for this scanty aid, as for the rations of bread. Shortly after, the supply of wood and charcoal was found to fail, and laws were passed, preventing any one from having in store more than a very limited quantity of these necessary articles. Lastly, the Convention, in February 1794, proclaimed a *general fast* for six weeks so far as butcher-meat was concerned. "Decree the fast I propose," said Barère, "or it will come in spite of you. We shall soon have neither meat nor candles. The oxen which are killed just now, have not enough of suet in them to make candles for their own slaughtering."¹*

The preceding details, all purposely taken from official documents and decrees of the Republican writers of France, and especially from their avowed and able leader and historian, M. Thiers, demonstrate that the picture drawn by a contemporary writer was not overcharged; and that the genius of Mr Burke had justly discerned, amid the transports of democracy, the galling bondage it was inflicting on mankind. "The state of France," says he, "is perfectly simple. It consists of but two descriptions; the oppressors and the oppressed. The first have the whole authority of the state in their hands; all the arms, all the revenues of the public, all the confiscations of individuals and corporations. They have taken the lower sort from their occupations, and have put them into pay, that they may form them into a body of janissaries to overrule and awe property. The heads of these wretches they have never suffered to cool. They supply them with a food for fury varied by the day, besides the sensual state of intoxication from which they are rarely free. They have made the priests and people formally abjure the Divinity; they have

CHAP.
XIV.

1794.

72.

People of
Paris put on
reduced ra-
tions. Fresh arbi-
trary taxa-
tion of the
opulent.
21st and 22d
Feb.

¹ Decree,
21st Feb.
Hist. Parl
xxxii. 9, 10,
and Moni-
teur, 5th
March. Th.
vi. 310, 314

73.

Mr Burke's
description
of France at
this period.

* The cattle in Paris, by a regulation of the police, are all slaughtered at four A.M.

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XIV.
1794.

estranged them from every civil, moral, and social, or even natural and instinctive sentiment, habit, and practice, and have rendered them systematically savages, to make it impossible for them to be the instruments of any sober and virtuous arrangement, or to be reconciled to any state of order, under any name whatsoever.

“The other description—the oppressed—the people of some property; they are the small relics of the persecuted landed interest; they are the burghers and the farmers. By the very circumstance of their being of some property, though numerous in some points of view, they cannot be very considerable as a number. In cities, the nature of their occupations renders them domestic and feeble; in the country, it confines them to their farm for subsistence. The National Guards are all changed and reformed. Every thing suspicious in the description of which they were composed is rigorously disarmed. Committees, called of vigilance and safety, are every where formed—a most severe and scrutinising inquisition, far more rigid than any thing ever known or imagined. Two persons cannot meet and confer without hazard to their liberty, and even to their lives. Numbers scarcely credible have been executed, and their property confiscated. At Paris, and in most other towns, the bread they buy is a daily dole, which they cannot obtain without a daily ticket delivered to them by their masters. Multitudes of all ages and sexes are actually imprisoned. I have reason to believe, that in France there are not, for various state crimes, so few as twenty thousand actually in jail—a large proportion of people of property in any state.* If a father of a family should show any disposition to resist or to withdraw himself from their power, his wife and children are cruelly to answer for it. It is by means of these hostages that they keep the troops, which they force by masses (as they call it) into the field—true to their colours. Another of their resources is not to be forgotten. They have lately found a way of giving a sort of ubiquity to the supreme sovereign authority, which no monarch has been able yet to give to any representative of his. The commissioners

* How much was this within the truth! When Mr Burke said this, in spring 1794, the prisoners in France exceeded 200,000. Even his ardent imagination fell immeasurably short of the real atrocities of the Reign of Terror.

of the National Convention, who are the members of the Convention itself, and really exercise all its powers, make continual circuits through every province, and visits to every army. There they supersede all the ordinary authorities, civil and military, and change and alter every thing at their pleasure. So that, in effect, no deliberative capacity exists in any portion of the inhabitants."¹*

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XIV.

1793.

¹ Burke's
Works, vii.
135.

In the midst of all these extraordinary and unprecedented changes in society, however, the moral laws of nature were unceasingly working, and preparing, in the present triumph of wickedness, its final and condign punishment. Divisions, as usual, had sprung up in the victorious body on the destruction of their opponents. Two parties remained opposed, on different principles, to the Decemvirs, whose destruction was indispensable to the full establishment of their despotic authority. These parties were the Moderates and the Anarchists. At the head of the former were Danton and Camille Desmoulins; the latter was supported by the powerful municipality of Paris. It has been already observed, that Danton and his party were strangers to the real objects of the revolt on May 31. They aided the populace in the struggle with the Convention; but they had no intention of establishing the oligarchy which directed, and finally triumphed by their exertions. After the overthrow of the Girondists, Robespierre urged Danton to retire to the country. "A tempest is arising," said he; "the Jacobins have not forgot your relations with Dumourier. They hate your manners; your voluptuous and indolent habits are at variance with their austere habits and undying energy. Withdraw for a little; trust to a friend, who will watch over your danger, and warn you of the first moment to return." Danton followed his advice, nothing loath to get quit of a faction of which he began to dread the excesses; and his party was entirely excluded from the Dictatorial Government.²

74.
Estrangement of the
Dantonists
and ruling
Power.

² Lac. Pr.
Hist. ii. 91.
Mig. ii. 300,
301.

The leaders of this party were Danton, Phillippeaux, Camille Desmoulins, Fabre d'Eglantine, and Westerman, the tried commander on August 10. Their principles were, that terror was to be used only for the establishment of freedom,

75.
Principles of
the Danton-
ists.

* Burke on the Policy of the Allies.

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not made an instrument of oppression in the hands of those who had gained it; they wished above all things that the Republicans should remain masters of the field of battle, but having done so, they proposed to use their victory with moderation. In pursuance of these principles, they reprobated the violent proceedings of the Dictators, after the victory of 31st May had insured the triumph of the populace; desired to humble the Anarchists of the municipality, to put an end to the Revolutionary Tribunal, discharge from confinement those imprisoned as suspected persons, and dissolve the despotic committees of government. They had been all-powerful with the people as long as they urged on their excesses, but their influence had sensibly declined since they had withdrawn from an active part in public life, and were no longer to be seen, at the Jacobins or the Cordeliers, hounding on the people to deeds of violence or murder; and the blasting reputation of *moderatism* had not only already undermined their power, but threatened to bring them to the scaffold.¹

¹ Deux
Ann. xii.
127, 129.
Th. vi. 6, 7.
Lac. Pr.
Hist. ii. 91.
Mig. ii. 301.

76.
Principles of
the Anarch-
ists and
Hébert.

The other party, that of the municipality, carried their ambition and extravagance even beyond the Decemvirs. Instead of government, they professed a desire to establish an extreme local democracy; instead of religion, the consecration of materialism. As usual, in democratic contests, they pushed their revolutionary principles beyond the dominant faction, and strove thus to supplant them in the affections of the populace. They had witnessed, with extreme dissatisfaction, the committees usurp all the powers of government after the revolt of 31st May, and thus reap for themselves all the fruits of the victory which their forces had mainly contributed to achieve. They had flattered themselves that their weight, as the head of the powerful municipality of Paris, having the whole armed force of the capital at their command, would have been sufficient to have established them in all the offices of government; but they had been outwitted by Robespierre and the Committee of Public Salvation, who, equal to themselves in democratic energy and popular arts, were far their superiors in talent, and had the great advantage of being in possession of a preponderating influence in the Convention. Hence they strove to supplant them in the favour of the people by still louder professions

of popular zeal, and the open avowal of irreligious opinions. Hence the orgies of the goddess of reason and other indecent mummeries, with which they captivated the populace of Paris, but, in the eyes of its abler and less selfish leaders, disgraced the Revolution. In cruelty, obscenity, and atheism, they exceeded the Dictatorial Government; but these were only means to an end. In the passion for tyrannical power, they yielded to none, provided only it was wielded by themselves.¹

These two parties, as usual in civil dissensions, mutually reproached each other with the public calamities. The Anarchists incessantly charged the Moderates with corruption, and being the secret agents of foreign courts. The treason of Dumourier, who had been on terms of intimacy with Danton, was in an equal manner made the subject of impassioned invective. "It is you," replied the Dantonists, "who are the real accomplices of the stranger; every thing draws you towards them, both the common violence of your language, and the joint design to overturn every thing in France. Behold the magistracy, which arrogates to itself more than legislative authority; which regulates every thing—police, subsistence, worship; which has substituted a new religion for the old one; replaced one superstition by another still more absurd; which openly preaches atheism, and causes itself to be imitated by all the municipalities in France. Consider those war-offices, from whence so many extortioners issue, who carry desolation into the provinces, and discredit the Revolution by their conduct. Observe the municipality and the committees—what do they propose to themselves, if it is not to usurp the Executive and Legislative authority, to dispossess the Convention, and dissolve the government? Who could suggest such a design but the external enemies of France?"²

Camille Desmoulins, in a celebrated pamphlet, entitled "Le Vieux Cordelier," drew under a professed description of Rome under the Emperors, a striking picture of the horrors of that gloomy period. "Every thing," said he, "under that terrible government was made the groundwork of suspicion. Has a citizen popularity? He is a rival of the Dictator, who might create disturbances. Does he avoid society, and live retired by his fireside? That is to

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¹ Hist. Parl.
xxx. 206,
207. Th. ii.
298. Mig. ii.
298. Toul.
vi. 286,
Journal de la
Montagne,
No. 158.

77.

Mutual re-
proaches of
the Danton-
ists and An-
archists.

² Deux
Amis, xli.
84, 86.
Hist. Parl.
xxx. 215,
217. Th.
vi. 10, 11.

78.

Publication
of the Vieux
Cordelier.

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ruminate in private on sinister designs. Is he rich ? That renders the danger the greater, that he will corrupt the citizens by his largesses. Is he poor ? None so dangerous as those who have nothing to lose. Is he thoughtful and melancholy ? He is revolving what he calls the calamities of his country. Is he gay and dissipated ? He is concealing, like Cæsar, ambition under the mask of pleasure. Is he virtuous and austere ? He has constituted himself the censor of the government. Is he a philosopher, an orator, and a poet ? He will soon acquire more consideration than the rulers of the state. Has he acquired reputation in war ? His talents only render him the more formidable, and make it indispensable to get quit of his authority. The natural death of a celebrated man is become so rare, that historians transmit it as a matter worthy of record to future ages. Even the loss of so many great and good citizens, seems a less calamity than the insolence and scandalous fortune of their denouncers. Every day the accuser makes his triumphal entry into the palace of death, and reaps the rich harvest which is presented to his hands. The tribunals, once the protectors of life and property, have become the organs of butchery, where robbery and murder have usurped the names of confiscation and punishment." ¹ Such is the picture drawn of the result of popular government by the man who was called the first apostle of liberty ! And how striking the coincidence, that in drawing with the pencil of Tacitus a picture of Roman servitude under Nero and Caligula, he was exhibiting a portrait which none could fail to recognise of France, under the government which his own democratic transports had contributed to impose upon its inhabitants.

¹ Vieux Cordelier, Rév. Mém. cit. p. 50, 51, 53.

79.
Efforts of Danton to detach Robespierre from the Municipality.

Danton and his friends made the greatest efforts to detach Robespierre from the sanguinary faction with which he had so long acted, and at first with some appearance of success. The Convention, under his direction, had passed several decrees for the succour of the destitute, and for the establishment of a general system of public instruction, though the general confusion and corruption of inferior functionaries had prevented their being carried into execution. He had taken some steps towards a moderate government ; in the Convention he had publicly stopped the trial of the seventy-three deputies, who were detained

in prison in consequence of having protested against the arrest of the Girondists. He had reprobated the ultra-revolutionary measures of Hébert and the municipality, and strongly condemned the anti-religious mummeries which had been acted in the Convention and Notre-Dame. He had not only read, but corrected, the proof-sheets of the "Vieux Cordelier," where he was adjured in the most touching language to embrace the sentiments of humanity. The *Journal de la Montagne*, a journal entirely under his direction, had brought forward an able article on the existence of a Supreme Being, and the favourable influence of such a belief in a republican community.* Already his popularity, in consequence, was on the wane. He was accused of *Moderatism*, and the groups of the Jacobins began to murmur at his proceedings.¹

In truth, the Revolution had now reached its culminating point—THE REACTION HAD BEGUN. Robespierre, with all his fanaticism in favour of democracy, perceived, as strongly as any man in France, the necessity both of some religious impressions to act as a curb upon the passions of the people, and of a strong central government to check their excesses. He early felt a horror at the infidel atrocities of the municipality, and saw that such principles, if persisted in, would utterly disorganise society throughout the Republic. When Hébert, Chaumette, and the chiefs of the municipality, appeared in the Convention with the Goddess of Reason and the troop of opera-dancers, Robespierre and St Just were observed to cast a look of indignation on the scene, and, rising up, they left the Assembly. That was the

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1 Mig. ii.
305, 307.
Lac. Pr.
Hist. ii.
136, 138.
Vieux Cor-
delier, 73.
Journal de
la Mont.
No. 158.

80.
Culminating
point of the
Revolution.

* As this is the extreme point of the extravagance of the Revolution, and the one when a reaction began from the effect of its own principles, the following extracts from the leading journals of the Anarchists, and of Robespierre, at the time, are well deserving of attention :—

In the journal of the former, it was stated—"Le hazard seul pouvait déterminer un enfant pour la Quakerie, la Juderie, la Réforme, ou la Catholicité : il est plus que presumable que sa tête re-tiendra vide de toute religion, jusqu'à ce qu'il a s'en batisé une lui-même, si cela l'arrange un jour ; et ce sera un des prodiges les plus efficaces de tous pour consolider l'édifice de notre liberté : car il n'y a pas de nation libre avec des préjugés ; et l'on sait combien le secours des prêtres fut utile aux rois. Voltaire a dit, 'Si Dieu n'existait pas, il faudrait l'inventer ;' cette maxime ne pourrait être trop payée dans une monarchie ; mais dans une république, et au moyen de l'éducation national, moi je dis, 'Si mon fils veut des dieux, il faut qu'il les invente.'"—*La Feuille du Salut Public*, November 1, 1793.

In the *Journal de la Montagne*, Number 158, it was answered, evidently by the hand of Robespierre, though the article bears the signature of Charles Leveau :—"L'auteur dit assez clairement que l'opinion de l'existence d'un Dieu est utile à une monarchie, et que l'athéisme convient aux

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¹ Duval,
Souv. de la
Terreur, iv.
143, 144.

commencement of the revolution in favour of order and religion. Markworthy circumstance! The series of causes and effects which overthrew the Revolution that had sprung from the atheistical doctrines of the philosophers, began with the practical application of those very doctrines themselves.¹

81.
First indica-
tion of an
intention by
Robespierre
to destroy
the Anarch-
ists.
Nov. 21.

In accordance with the sanguinary spirit of the times, Robespierre resolved to begin the necessary reforms by the extermination of the Anarchists. The first indication of this determination appeared in his speech at the Jacobin Club on the 21st of November. "Let men," said he, "animated by a pure zeal, lay upon the altar of their country the useless and pompous monuments of superstition; but by what title does hypocrisy come here to mingle its influence with that of patriotism? What right have men, hitherto unknown in the career of the Revolution, to come into the midst of you, to seek in passing events a false popularity, to hurry on the patriots to fatal measures, and to throw among them the seeds of trouble and discord? By what title do they disturb the existing worship in the name of Liberty, and attack fanaticism by a band of another kind of fanatics? One would suppose, from the manner in which these men agree, that the Convention had proscribed the Catholic faith. It has done no such thing: it has, on the contrary, by a solemn decree, established the liberty of worship. It will alike proscribe the ministers of religion who disturb, and protect those who respect, the public peace. It is the Royalist not the Catholic priesthood whom it has with justice persecuted. We have heard of priests

républicains. Cette assertion est absolument fautive, et démentie par toute l'histoire. Deux choses sont pernicieuses et fatales au genre humain—deux choses tendant également à la destruction de la société humaine—l'athéisme et la superstition: mais l'idée de l'existence d'un Être Suprême fut de tout temps la base de toute vertu civile, politique, domestique. Ceux qui jetèrent les fondemens de la république Romaine avaient le plus grand respect pour une Intelligence Suprême: et l'attachement sublime et inviolable des Romains aux sermens est un des moyens qui a le plus contribué à leur donner ce caractère mâle, intrépide, et courageux, source de toutes les grandes actions qui feront toujours le sujet de notre admiration. Mais il était athée le sénat de Rome lorsqu'il eut la bassesse de vendre à César la dictature perpétuelle—il était athée lorsqu'il rampa lâchement sous Auguste, le bourreau de la liberté; et c'est sous la règle de l'athéisme que se voit dominer sur le genre humain un Tibère, un Néron, un Caligula—qui détruiraient sur la terre jusqu'à la moindre étincelle de la liberté. L'idée d'une Intelligence Suprême, qui dirige et qui est elle-même l'ordre qui règne dans l'univers, doit être la base de toute instruction civile, de toute société humaine, de toute instruction publique."—*Journal de la Montagne*, 9th November 1793, No. 158.

being denounced for having said th. mass : they will only say it the longer for being disturbed. He who would prevent them is more fanatical than he who celebrates the ceremony. There are men who would go farther : who, under the pretence of destroying superstition, would establish atheism itself. Every philosopher, every individual, is at liberty to adopt whatever opinion he pleases : whoever imputes it to him as a crime is a fool ; but the legislature would be a thousand times more blameable, which should act on such a system. The Convention abhors all such attempts. It is no maker of metaphysical theories, but a popular body charged with causing, not only the rights, but the character of the French people to be respected. It is not in vain that it has proclaimed the rights of man, and the liberty of conscience. Atheism is an aristocratic belief. The idea of a Supreme Being, who watches over oppressed innocence, and punishes triumphant crime, is, and ever will be, popular. The people, the unfortunate, will ever applaud it ; it will never find detractors but among the rich and the guilty. I have been since my youth but an indifferent Catholic ; but I have neither been a cold friend nor a lukewarm defender of humanity. I am even more strongly attached to moral and political truth than I have hitherto divulged. *If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent Him.*"¹ *

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¹ Journal
des Jaco-
bins, No.
544, 21st
Nov. Th.
vi. 15. 17.

But while thus preparing the way for the destruction of the Anarchists, Robespierre saw that it was necessary to make a sacrifice to the Revolutionary party, in order to avoid the blasting imputation of moderation, and keep up his reputation for unflinching resolution and incorruptible integrity. For this purpose, he resolved at the same time that he should cut off Hébert, Chaumette, and the Anarchists, to strike with equal severity against Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and the Moderate party. By so doing, he would keep up the appearance of even-handed justice, establish the supremacy of the Committee of Public Salvation over all the factions in the state, and remove the only rival that stood between him and sole dominion.† But while these ambitious or envious motives were not without

82.
Robespierre
and St Just
resolve to
destroy both
the Danton-
ists and
Anarchists.

* " Si Dieu n'existait pas, il faudrait l'inventer."—Voltaire was the original author of this striking expression.

† " Envieux l'un de l'autre, ils mènent tout par brigues,
Que leur ambition tourne en sanglantes ligue.

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their influence in suggesting this bold and exterminating policy, yet were Robespierre and St Just, in adopting it, not without the impulse of public and elevated motives. They believed in good faith, and not without some show of reason, that the parties in the state of which those leaders were the representatives, were alike dangerous to republican institutions; the one by urging them on to anarchy, the other by paving the way for a return to monarchy. Stern advance, unrelenting severity, entire destruction, of all classes above the people in rank, wealth, or knowledge, appeared to these ruthless fanatics the only real preparation for republican equality and virtue. But they were equally inexorable against the atheism which would corrupt, the vices which would degrade it. In their mistaken views of human nature they believed, that when the leaders of both were guillotined, nothing would remain to prevent the general establishment of republican principles, simplicity, virtue, and happiness.¹*

¹ Th. vi.
186, 187.
Hist. Parl.
xxx. 209,
216.

83.
Danton's
speech on
returning to
the Jacobins.
Dec. 3.

Though ignorant that his destruction had been resolved on by the all-powerful Committee of Public Salvation, Danton was aware that for some months his popularity had been waning; and he returned to Paris, and loudly demanded at the Jacobins that the grounds of complaint should be exhibited against him. "I have heard," said he, "of rumours of accusations directed against me. I demand an opportunity of justifying myself in the eyes of the people. It will not be a difficult task. I call upon those who have been murmuring against me to specify their charges, for I will answer them in public. I perceived, when I ascended the tribune, a murmur of dissatisfaction prevail. Have I then lost the characteristics of a free man? Am I not the same as I was at your side in the days of alarm? Have you not all frequently embraced me as a friend, who was ready to die with you? For your sake

Ainsi de Marius Sylla devint jaloux,
César de mon aïeul, Marc Antoine de vous :
Ainsi la liberté ne peut plus être utile
Qu'à former les fureurs d'une guerre civile,
Lorsque par un désordre à l'univers fatal
L'un ne veut point de maître, et l'autre point d'égal."

Cinna, Act ii. scene 1.

* In Robespierre's speeches, and those of St Just, in November and December 1793, at the Jacobins and in the Convention, the clearest proof of their being actuated by these principles is to be found.—See *Histoire Parliémentaire*, xxx. 209—468.

have I not been overwhelmed by persecutions? I have been one of the most intrepid supporters of Marat; I invoke the shade of the Friend of the people to bear witness in my behalf. You would be astonished if you knew my private affairs; and the colossal fortune which my enemies and yours ascribe to me, is found to be reduced to the slender patrimony I have always possessed. I defy my detractors to prove against me any crime. All their efforts will be unable to shake me; I remain erect before the people. You will judge me in their presence. I cannot tear a page from my history, without tearing a page from theirs; and that too from the most glorious period of the annals of liberty."¹

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¹ Journal
des Jacobins, No.
550, 3d Dec.
Hist. Parl.
xxx. 327,
328.

Robespierre instantly ascended the tribune. "Danton," said he, "demands a commission to examine into his conduct: I consent to it, if he thinks it can be of any service to him. He demands a statement of the grounds of complaint against him: I agree to it. Danton, you are accused of being an emigrant; of having retired to Switzerland; of having feigned illness to conceal your flight; of being desirous to become Regent under Louis XVII.; of having made arrangements at a fixed time to proclaim that remnant of the Capets; of being the chief of a counter-revolutionary conspiracy; of being a worse enemy to France than either Pitt or Cobourg, England, Austria, or Prussia; of having filled the Mountain with your creatures. It is said that we need not disquiet ourselves about the inferior agents of foreign powers; that their conspiracies merit only contempt; but you, you alone, should be led out to the scaffold!" Loud applauses followed this bold declaration; when they had subsided, he continued, turning to his astonished rival—"Do you not know, Danton, that the more a man is gifted with energy and public spirit, the more the public enemies conspire for his overthrow? Do you not know, does not every one who hears me know, that that is an infallible test of real virtue? If the defender of liberty was not calumniated, it would be a proof that we had no longer either generals, or priests, or nobles to fear." He then demanded that all those who had any thing to reproach against Danton should come forward; but none, after such a declaration, ventured to say a word.² Upon that, amidst the applause of the meeting,

84.
Robes-
pierre's per-
fidious
speech in
regard to
him.

² Hist. Parl.
xxx. 328,
329. Th. vi.
21, 22.
Journ. des
Jacobins,
No. 550.

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85.
Increase of
the powers
of govern-
ment.

Dec. 4.

Danton received the fraternal embrace from the President. By this hypocritical conduct, Robespierre both ascertained the extent of the public feeling against his great rival, and threw him off his guard by feigned expressions of regard.

On the very next day, a new decree, augmenting the despotic powers of the Committee of Public Salvation, was passed. "Anarchy," said Billaud Varennes, in the preamble of the report on which the decree was founded, "menaces every republic alike in its cradle and its old age. Our part is to strive against it." On this principle, the decree enacted that a bulletin of the laws should be drawn up; that four individuals should have the exclusive right of framing it; that it should be printed on a particular paper and type, and sent down to the provinces by post. The Convention was at the same time declared the "Centre of Impulsion of Government,"—a dubious phrase, under which was veiled the despotic authority of the committees. The authority of the departmental assemblies was abolished for every thing except matters of local administration; and they were forbidden, under pain of death, to correspond on any political matter with each other, raise forces or taxes of their own authority, or correspond with or receive instructions from any body but the committees at Paris. Thus the liberties of the provinces were rapidly perishing under the despotic sway of the Committee of Public Salvation. All the powers of government, which by former decrees were vested in different bodies, were by this decree centred in that terrible committee. It alone was directed to conduct the foreign diplomacy, to appoint generals, admirals, and ambassadors, and the whole constituted authorities were ordered to correspond with it, and receive their instructions from it alone. Supported by the Jacobin club, of which Robespierre had now got the entire direction, and by all the affiliated clubs over France, this despotic power was now established on a solid basis: for it rested on the ardent democrats, who at once directed the magistracies and influenced the armies. The government was powerful, for the time irresistible; for the executive was in harmony both with the legislature and the whole depositaries of local popular power. A despotism had grown up out of the very excess of liberty.¹ France was already beginning

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxx. 254,
263. Deux
Amis, xi.
192, 207.

to enter the bloody path which leads from democratic anarchy to regular government.

Meanwhile, the strife of the Dantonists and Anarchists became daily more conspicuous. One of the latter, Ronsin, had affixed over the walls of Paris a placard, in which he declared, that out of a hundred and forty thousand souls at Lyons, fifteen hundred only were not accomplices of the revolt in that city, and that before February all the guilty should perish, and their bodies be floated by the Rhone to Toulon. Camille Desmoulins vigorously attacked this atrocious faction, and in an especial manner fastened on the infamous Hébert, whom he accused of being "a miserable intriguer, a caterer for the guillotine, a traitor paid by Pitt; a wretch who had received 200,000 francs at different times, from almost all the factions in the Republic, to calumniate their adversaries; a thief and robber, who had been expelled from being a lackey in the theatre for theft, and now aimed to drench France with blood by means of his prostituted journal." Such was the man, on the testimony of the Revolutionists themselves, on whose evidence Marie Antoinette had been condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal. "It is vain," he added, "to think of stifling my voice by threats of arrest: We all know that the Anarchists are preparing a new revolt, like the 31st May; but we may say with Brutus and Cicero, 'We fear too much exile, poverty, and death.' When our soldiers are daily braving death in sight of the enemy's batteries in the cause of freedom, shall we, their unworthy leaders, be intimidated by the menaces of the Père Duchèsne, or prevented by him from achieving a still greater victory over the ultra-Revolutionists, who would ruin the Revolution, by staining every step it makes with gore?"¹

While the parties were in this state of exasperation at each other, the Committee of Public Salvation boldly interposed between them, and resolved to make their discord the means of destroying both. Profiting with political dexterity by this singular situation of the parties, Robespierre and the members of the municipality came to an understanding, the condition of which was the mutual abandonment of their personal friends. Robespierre gave up Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and their supporters, to the vengeance of the municipality; and they surrendered

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86.

Attacks of
the Danton-
ists on the
Anarchists.

¹Vieux Cor-
dellier, Nos.
3, 4, and 5.
Hist. Parl.
xxxi. 202,
232.

87.

Secret
agreement
between
Robespierre
and the Mu-
nicipality.

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¹ Deux
Amis, xii.
102, 105.
Mig. ii. 306.
Th. vi. 186,
187. Lac.
ii. 139.

88.
Purification
of the Jacobin
Club.
Dec. 15.

Hébert, Chaumette, Ronsin, Clootz, and their party, to the Decemvirs. By this arrangement more than one important object was gained; two formidable factions were destroyed, and a rival to the reputation of the dictator was removed. It seemed impossible to accuse the government of tending towards anarchy, when it had destroyed the atheistical faction in the municipality; and equally hopeless to charge it with moderation, when it had struck down, for leaning towards a return to humanity, the authors of the massacres of September. In this way they proposed to tread the narrow and perilous path between two equally powerful parties, and realise their favourite expression of making terror and virtue the order of the day.¹

The Committee of Public Salvation, however, had need of all their influence and all their firmness, in proceeding against so powerful a faction as the Anarchists, headed by so weighty a body as the municipality of Paris. They began their operations by a purification of the Jacobin Club, as it was called, which went on for several days in the middle of December. In the course of these discussions, Robespierre denounced Hébert in the most violent terms. He was at first expelled, and subsequently only re-admitted on his declaring that "the gospel appeared to be a book of excellent morality; that all true Jacobins should follow its precepts; and that Jesus Christ was the founder of all popular societies." But Robespierre succeeded in excluding Anacharsis Clootz, a Prussian, who had acquired notoriety by styling himself "the orator of the human race." He did so by the never-failing device of representing him as the secret agent of the Allies.* At the same time that the leaders of the Anarchist faction were in this manner excluded by the all-powerful influence of Robespierre and the Committee of Public Salvation, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, Panis, Colombel, and all the other leaders of

* "Vous avez vu Clootz," said Robespierre, "tantôt aux pieds du tyran et de la cour, tantôt aux genoux du peuple. Lorsque une faction libéricide dominait au milieu de vous, Clootz embrassa le parti de Brissot et de Dumourier. Le Prussien Clootz appuya leurs opinions avec frénésie; et qu'on attaquât l'univers. Eh bien! Clootz, nous connaissons tes visites et tes complots nocturnes. Nous savons que, couvert des ombres de la nuit, tu as préparé avec l'évêque Gobel cette mascarade philosophique. Paris fourmille d'intriguans, d'Anglais, et d'Autrichiens. Ils siègent au milieu de vous avec les agens de Frédéric. Clootz est un Prussien. Je vous ai tracé l'histoire de sa vie publique. Prononcez!"—This speech sealed his doom.—See *Journal des Jacobins*, 15th December 1793.

the Moderate party were admitted. By this decisive measure the Anarchists were rendered wholly powerless in the Jacobins; and a severe blow was given to the weight of the municipality, by showing that its leading members were excluded from the ruling club of the Revolution, while their determined enemies were admitted, on the motion of Robespierre, amidst loud acclamation. His speech on proposing Camille Desmoulins, considering the awful tragedy which was fast approaching, is well worthy of consideration.^{1*}

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¹ Journal des Jacobins, 14th and 15th Dec. Nos. 555, 556.

Robespierre first announced his project of double vengeance in the Convention. "Without," said he, "all the tyrants of the earth are conspiring against you; within, all their friends are aiding their efforts: they will continue to do so till hope is severed from crime. We must stifle the external and internal enemies of the Republic, or perish with it. In such circumstances, the only principles of government are to rule the people by the force of Reason, and their enemies by the force of Terror. The spring of a popular government in peace is Virtue; in a revolution, it is Virtue and TERROR: Virtue, without which Terror is fatal—Terror, without which Virtue is impotent. The government of a revolution is the despotism of liberty against tyranny. The opposite factions with which we have to contend march under different banners, and by different routes; but their object is the same, the disorganisation of the popular government, and the triumph of tyranny. The one preaches fury, the other clemency; the one tends to this object by its leaning to weakness; the other, by its inclination to excess. The one would change liberty into a bacchanal, the other into a prostitute; the one would transport you into the torrid, the other into the frozen zone. But both alike keep aloof from

89.

Announcement of the project in the Convention.
Dec. 23.

* "Il faut," said Robespierre, "considérer Camille Desmoulins avec ses vertus et ses faiblesses. Quelquefois faible et confiant, souvent courageux, et toujours républicain, on l'a vu successivement l'ami de Lameth, de Mirabeau, de Dillon, mais on l'a vu aussi briser ces mêmes idoles qu'il avait encensées. Il les a sacrifiées sur l'autel qu'il leur avait élevé, aussitôt qu'il a reconnu leur perfidie. En un mot, il aimait la liberté par instinct et par sentiment, et n'a jamais aimé qu'elle, malgré les séductions puissantes de tous ceux qui la trahirent. J'engage Camille Desmoulins à poursuivre sa carrière; mais à n'être plus aussi versatile, et à tâcher de ne plus se tromper sur le compte des hommes qui jouent un grand rôle sur la scène publique." —*Journal de Jacobins*, No. 556, 558, 15th December 1793; and *Hist. Part.* xxi. 340, 341.

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courage, justice, magnanimity of soul. It is not worth while to try to distinguish; what is really material is to appreciate them by their objects and their ends. In that respect, you will find that they are sufficiently near each other. The Republic must steer between these two shoals, impotence and excess. Tyrants have wished to throw us back into servitude by moderation; sometimes they aim at the same object by throwing us into the opposite extreme. These two extremes terminate in the same point. Whether they fall short or overshoot the mark, they equally miss it. The friend of kings and the orator of the human race understand each other perfectly. The fanatic covered with his relics, and the fanatic who preaches atheism, are closely allied. The democratic barons are twin-brothers of those at Coblenz; and sometimes the *bonnet rouges* are nearer the *talons rouges* than would be at first imagined.¹

¹ Rapport de Robespierre, Dec 23, 1793, Hist. Parl. xxx. 463, 469. Mlg. ii. 307. Th. vi. 155, 156. Pap. ined. trouv. chez. Rob. ii. 49.

90.
Robespierre's speech in support of it.

"Foreign powers have vomited into France able villains, whom they retain in their pay. They deliberate in our administrations, insinuate themselves into our sections and our clubs, sit in the Convention, and eternally direct the counter-revolution by the same means. They flutter round us, extract by surprise our secrets, caress our passions, and seek to make us converts to their opinions. By turns they drive us to exaggeration or weakness; excite in Paris the fanaticism of the new worship, and in La Vendée resistance to the old; assassinate Marat and Lepelletier, and mingle with the group which would deify their remains: at one time spread plenty among the people, at another reduce them to all the horrors of famine; circulate and withdraw the metallic currency, and thus occasion the extraordinary changes in the value of money; profit, in fine, by every accident, to turn it against France and the Revolution." Such is the invariable policy of revolutionary parties, to impute to strangers the natural effect of their own passions and vices. This speech was ordered to be printed, and circulated over all France. It was followed by a decree, sending Biron, Custine's son, Dietrich, mayor of Strasbourg, and all the friends of Dumourier, Custine, and Houchard, to the Revolutionary Tribunal, from whence they were soon after conducted to the scaffold.²

² Hist. Parl. xxx. 465, 466. Th. vi. 120, 121.

"Citizens," said St Just, some time after, "you wish a

republic ; if you are not prepared at the same time to wish for what constitutes it, you will be buried under its ruins. Now, what constitutes a republic is *the destruction of every thing which opposes it*. You are culpable towards the republic if you have pity on the captives ; you are culpable if you do not support virtue ; you are culpable if you do not support terror. What do you propose, you who would not strike terror into the wicked ? What do you propose, you who would sever virtue from happiness ? You shall perish, you who only act the patriot till bought by the stranger, or placed in office by the government ; you of the indulgent faction, who would save the wicked ; you of the foreign faction, who would be severe only on the friends of freedom. Measures are already taken ; you are surrounded. Thanks to the genius of France, Liberty has risen victorious from one of the greatest dangers she ever encountered ; the terror she will strike into her enemies will for ever purge the earth of the conspirators. We are accused of cruelty ; but we are humane in comparison of other governments. A monarchy floats on the blood of thirty generations, and shall you hesitate to punish the guilty of one ? Do we experience reverses ? the indulgent prophesy calamities : Are we prosperous ? they never mention our successes. You are more occupied with pamphlets than the Republic.* You demand the opening of the prisons : you might as well demand at once the misery and destruction of the people. The same conspiracy is now striving to save the guilty which formerly strove to save the tyrant. A monarchy does not consist in a king, but in crime ; a republic not in a senate, but in virtue. Whoever would spare crime is striving to restore the monarchy : spare the aristocracy, and you will have thirty years of civil war : those who make revolutions by halves, only dig their own graves." The Convention, awed by the tyrants, invested the committees with full power to crush the conspiracies. They decreed that *Terror and Virtue* should be the order of the day.¹

The Anarchists were the first to feel the vengeance of their former supporters. They in vain endeavoured to rouse their ancient partisans in the commune to support

1794.

91.

Remarkable speech to the same effect, by St Just, March 2, 1794.

¹ Parl. Hist. xxxi. 385, 391. Deux Amis, xii. 115, 116. Mig. ii. 309. Lac. ii. 145.

* Alluding to the *Vieux Cordelier* of Camille Desmoulins, recently pub.

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1794.

92.

Proscription
of the Anar-
chists.

their cause ; terror had frozen every heart. As the danger became more menacing, they openly organised a revolt, and strove to the very uttermost to rouse the immense population of Paris for their support. Their leaders made extraordinary efforts to excite the people to insurrection ; and innumerable placards, ascribing the whole public evils, and in particular the famine which prevailed, to the Convention, appeared in the markets, and in all the populous quarters of Paris. The statue of Liberty was covered with crape at the club of the Cordeliers, where they had taken refuge since their expulsion from the Jacobins ; and insurrection openly prevailed on the 4th March. They even went so far as to propose that the whole Convention should be dissolved, a new one assembled, a dictator named, and an executive government organised. But all the efforts of Hébert, with his infamous journal—*Momoro*, with the resolutions of the Section Marat, which he had roused to espouse their cause—and Vincent, with his frenzied followers, could not produce a popular movement. The municipality held back ; the Jacobins were ruled by the Committee of Public Salvation and Robespierre. Driven from their powerful club, where the Decemvirs predominated, they sought refuge in that of the Cordeliers ; but all to no purpose. One section alone, that of Marat, declared in their favour ; in all the others, hesitation and division of opinion prevailed. Fear of the terrible energy of the Committee of Public Salvation paralysed every arm. Seeing public opinion, after a few days, sufficiently pronounced, Robespierre acted. On the night of the 12th, the whole leaders of the Anarchists were arrested by their former agent, Henriot, at the head of the armed force which they had so often wielded against the government, and sent before the Revolutionary Tribunal, to stand trial for a conspiracy to put a tyrant at the head of affairs.¹

March 12.

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxxi. 329,
331. Deux
Amis, xii.
122, 125.

93.
Their dis-
graceful
death.
March 26.

Hébert, Ronsin, Anacharsis Clootz, Momoro, Vincent, and fifteen others of their party, were all condemned. They evinced the native baseness of their dispositions by their cowardice in their last moments. The infamous Hébert wept from weakness. The numerous captives in the prisons of Paris could hardly believe their eyes when they beheld the tyrants, who had sent so many to execution, and who were

preparing a new massacre in the prisons, consigned, in their turn, to the scaffold. The populace, with their usual inconstancy, manifested joy at their punishment, and, in particular, loaded with maledictions the very Hébert, for whose deliverance from the arrest of the Convention they had so recently before put all Paris in insurrection. Such was the public avidity to see the execution of these leaders, lately so popular, that considerable sums were realised by the sale of seats on the fatal chariots, to witness their agonies, and on the tables and benches arranged round the scaffold.* Hébert, in particular, was the object of universal execration: his atheistical mummeries had alienated all the better class of citizens, and the numerous denunciations he had undergone from Robespierre and St Just, had rendered him an object of detestation to the populace. He made no attempt to conceal his terrors: he sank down at every step; and the vile populace, so recently his worshippers, followed the car, mimicking the cry of the persons who hawked his journal about the streets.—“Father Duchêne is in a devil of a rage.”† The victory of the Decemvirs was complete.‡ They followed up the blow by disbanding the revolutionary force stationed at Paris, and diminishing the power of the committees of sections; all steps, and not unimportant ones, to the establishment of a regular government.¹ The municipality of Paris, subdued by terror, was compelled to send a deputation to the Convention,

¹ Deux Amis, xli. 125, 126. Th. vi. 162, 182. Luc. ii. 144. Mig. ii. 310. Hist. Parl. xxxi. 397, 399, and xxxii. 53. 55.

* “Hébert montra jusqu’au bout une extrême faiblesse. Pendant le trajet de la Conciergerie à l’échafaud, le spectacle de son agonie empêcha que l’on peut être attentif à la contenance de ses compagnons. La dernière nuit dans la prison il a eu des accès de désespoir.” Ronsin said in prison to him, “Vous avez parti aux Cordeliers, tandis qu’il fallait agir, on vous arrête en chemin; et vous deviez savoir que, *tôt ou tard, les instruments des révolutions sont brisés.*”—*Rapport d’un détenu dans les prisons avec HÉBERT; and Histoire Parlementaire*, xxxi. 53, 55.

† “Il est b——t en colère le Père Duchêne”—alluding to his journal, *Lettres b——t patriotiques du véritable Père Duchêne*. In recounting such scenes, the spirit is lost if the very words are not used.

‡ In the proceedings against Hébert, some curious facts came out as to the means by which the infamous revolutionary press of Paris was stimulated during the principal crises of the Revolution. The following entries appear:—

“Extrait de Registres de la Trésorerie Nationale.

2 Juin.—(Arrest of Girondists) Donné au Père

Duchêne,

Mois d’Août, . . .

4 Oct.

135,000 francs.

10,000

60,000 ”

In five months,

205,000 or L.8250.

See *Histoire Parlementaire*, xxxi. 232; *Vieux Cordelier*, No. V. and *Père Duchêne*, No. 330, 332.

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94.
Rupture
between
Danton and
Robes-
pierre.

returning thanks for the arrest and punishment of its own members. And the Committee of Public Salvation succeeded in destroying the very man of whose infamous journal they had shortly before been in the habit of distributing ten thousand copies daily at the public expense.*

Danton and his partisans had not long the satisfaction of exulting over the destruction of the Anarchists. Robespierre and he had a meeting in the house of the former, but it led to no accommodation: Danton complained violently of the conduct of his former friend; Robespierre maintained a haughty reserve. "I know," said Danton, "all the hatred which the committee bear me, but I do not fear it."—"You are wrong," said Robespierre, "they have no bad intentions against you; but it is well to be explicit."—"To be explicit," rejoined Danton, "good faith is necessary. Without doubt it is necessary to coerce the Royalists; but we should not confound the innocent with the guilty."—"And who has told you," said Robespierre, "that one innocent person has perished?" Danton upon this, turning to the friend who accompanied him, said with a bitter smile—"What say you? Not one innocent has perished?" They parted mutually exasperated; all intercourse between them immediately ceased. And yet had Robespierre sufficient evidence, during the days that immediately followed the execution of the Anarchists, that terror had reached its extreme point, and that a return to humanity was at length ardently desired by the people. Innumerable addresses were presented to the Convention between the 26th and 30th March, congratulating them on the execution of the men who had disgraced the Revolution; the revolutionary army, of which Ronsin had been the chief, was disbanded amidst general applause, (30th March,) and a discussion had even taken place at the Jacobins, as to recommending the removal of the busts of Châlier and Marat from their hall.¹

In truth, the Dantonists and friends of humanity, overjoyed at the punishment of Hébert and the extreme Anarchist leaders, gave full reins to their intoxication, and imprudently spread the report through Paris, that the reign of blood was about to terminate. They even went so far

¹ Prudhom.
me, v. 146.
Hist. Parl.
xxxi. 62.
Mig. ii. 308.
Th. vi. 189.
Joura. de
la Mont.
No. 139, p.
1124.

* "Le Comité du Salut Public faisait distribuer tous les jours dix mille exemplaires de ce journal. Ainsi le Père Duchêne n'était que l'organe des principes de ce comité."—PRUDHOMME, v. 143.

as to suggest, that a return should be at last made to more humane principles. Collot d'Herbois and the Jacobins sufficiently showed, however, that the Committee of Public Salvation had no intention of arresting the march of the Revolution. "The counter-revolutionists," said he, at their club, "announce by a thousand mouths, that the bust of Marat is about to be disgraced, and replaced by that of the monster who assassinated him. The aristocracy wish to profit by existing circumstances to attack the Revolution, by uniting the purest to the oppressors, and assimilating the traitors who have just been punished to the martyrs of liberty. They even go so far as to propose that the Jacobins should go into their projects, and make all the supporters of the Revolution tremble. Already they have proscribed Châlier; soon they will proscribe Marat too, and replace his bust by some other one, probably that of the tyrant. (*Loud cries of indignation.*) Open your eyes to the dangers which surround you, and you will see that measures very different from those proposed by the Moderates are now called for: government will act differently. They have caused the thunder to fall on the infamous men who have deceived the people; they have torn from them the masks which concealed their hideous outrages; *they will tear the mask from others*: let not the Moderates suppose that it is for them that we have held here our glorious sittings. I propose that whoever casts a doubt on the martyr Châlier, should at once be declared a counter-revolutionist, and sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal."¹

Alarmed by these ominous words, the friends of Danton now conjured him to take steps to insure his own safety; but no resource remained to ward off the threatened blow. The club of the Cordeliers, indeed, was devoted to him, and the Convention in secret leaned to his side; but these bodies had no real power; the armed force was entirely in the hands of the Committee of Public Salvation. Having failed in rousing public opinion by means of the journals of his party, and the exertions of his friends in the Convention, what other expedients remained? "I would rather," said he, "be guillotined than become guillotiner: my life is not worth the trouble of preserving; I am weary of existence. Set off into exile! do you suppose that one

CHAP.
XIV.

1794.

95.
Speech of
Collot
d'Herbois
at the Ja-
cobins.
March 29.

¹ Journ. de
la Mont.
No. 139.
Séance,
March 29,
p. 1125.

96.
Arrest of
Danton.

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carries their country about with them on the sole of their shoe?" On the day before his arrest, he received notice that his imprisonment was under the consideration of the Committee, and he was again pressed to fly; but, after a moment's deliberation, he only answered, "They dare not!" In the night his house was surrounded, and he was arrested, along with Camille Desmoulins, Lacroix, Hérault de Sechelles, and Westerman. On entering the prison he cordially welcomed the captives who flocked to behold him.

March 30.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I hoped to have been the means of delivering you all from this place; but here I am among you, and God only knows where this will end." He was immediately afterwards shut up in a solitary cell, the same which Hébert had recently before occupied. On entering it he exclaimed—"At last I perceive that in revolutions the supreme power finally rests with the most abandoned."* During the short period that elapsed before his execution, his mind, in a distracted state, reverted to the innocence of his earlier years. "He spoke incessantly," said his fellow captive Riouffe, "of trees, flowers, and the country." Then, giving way to unavailing regret, he exclaimed—"It was just a year ago that I was the means of instituting the Revolutionary Tribunal: may God and man forgive me for what I did! I hoped in so doing to avert a second massacre in the prisons; it was not that it might become the scourge of humanity!"¹

1 Deux
Amis, xli.
126, 127.
Mig. ii. 310,
312. Th.
vi 192.
Riouffe, 67.
Hist. Parl.
xxxii. 212,
213.

97.
Violent agi-
tation in the
Convention.
March 30.

His arrest produced a violent agitation in Paris; the Convention on the following morning was shaken by a general inquietude, which broke out in half-suppressed murmurs. "Citizens!" said Legendre, "four of the national representatives have been arrested during the night: Danton is one, I am ignorant of the others. Danton is as innocent as myself, and yet he is in irons. His accusers, without doubt, are afraid that his answers would demolish the charges brought against him; but you are bound to do justice; and I demand that, before the report of the committee is received, he be examined in your presence." The proposition was favourably received by some, and loudly hooted by others. Tallien, the president, gave

* "Enfin je vois que dans les révolutions l'autorité toujours reste aux plus scélérats."—RIOUFFE, p. 67. A memorable sentiment, coming from such lips.

it his energetic support. "I will maintain," said he, "the liberty of opinion : let every one freely express his opinion. I remind his colleagues that we are here for the people, and concerned only with their interest. It is time to have done with individual disputes. Let the friends of the Revolution prove to-day their love for liberty. I will proclaim the decrees which have passed for the maintenance of liberty of speech." Loud applauses followed these words ; and from the agitation which prevailed, there is no doubt that if Danton had been brought before them, his powerful voice would have broken the talisman of the Decemvirs, and closed the reign of blood. But Robespierre immediately mounted the tribune ¹

1784.

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxxii. 67.
Deux Amis,
xii. 127.

"From the trouble, for long unknown," said he, "which reigns in the Convention ; from the agitation produced by the words you have just heard ; it is evident that a great interest is at stake, and that the point now to be determined is, whether the safety of a few individuals is to prevail over that of the country. We shall see this day whether the Convention has courage to break a pretended idol, or to suffer it in its fall to overwhelm the Assembly and the people of France. Danton, you shall answer to inflexible justice : let us examine your conduct. Accomplish in every criminal enterprise, you ever espoused the cause which was adverse to freedom : you intrigued with Mirabeau and Dumourier, with Hébert and Hérault de Sechelles ; you have made yourself the slave of tyranny. Mirabeau, who contemplated a change of dynasty, felt the value of your audacity, and secured it : you abandoned all your former principles, and nothing more was heard of you till the massacre in the Champ de Mars. At every crisis you have deserted the public interest ; you have ever attached yourself to the traitor party." The terror inspired by these words restored silence in the Convention ; and at the same time, St Just, followed by the other members of the Committee of Public Salvation, entered the hall. With slow steps, a sombre and decided air, they approached the Tribune, when Robespierre again addressed Legendre. "Go on ; it is well that all the associates of the conspirators we have arrested should at once make themselves known.² You have heard of the despotism of the Committees, as if the confidence which

98.
Robes-
pierre's
speech sub-
dues them.

² Hist. Parl.
xxxii. 67, 68.
Deux Amis,
xii. 128, 129.
Mig. ii. 312.
313. Lac. ii.
145. Th. vi.
194, 195.
Hist. de la
Conv. iii.
338.

1794.

the people have reposed in you, and which you have transferred to the Committees, was not the surest guarantee for their patriotism. You affect to be afraid; but I say, whoever trembles at this moment is guilty, for never did innocence fear the vigilance of the public authorities." Unanimous applause from hands shaking with fright followed these words. None ventured to incur the terrible imputation—terror froze every heart; and St Just, without opposition, ascended the Tribune.

99.
Speech of St
Just against
Danton.

1 Hist. de la
Conv. iii.
334. Ri-
ouffe, 67.
Jac. ii. 145.
Thiers, vi.
198, 201.
Mig. ii. 313.

He there made a detailed exposition of the grounds of accusation against the Moderate party, recounted their private irregularities, their unpardonable clemency; charged them with being accomplices in every conspiracy, from that of the Royalists, whom they overthrew on the 10th August, to that of the Anarchists, whose treason had so recently been punished. The utter absurdity of imputing to them such contradictory crimes, and supposing them in league with their bitterest enemies, was too glaring to escape observation; but the Convention, mastered by fear, crouched beneath their tyrants, and *unanimously*, amidst loud applause, sent the accused to the Revolutionary Tribunal. The galleries imitated their example. From those benches, whence had issued so often bursts of applause at their speeches, were now heard only fierce demands for their heads.¹

100.
Their trial,
and prelimi-
nary pro-
ceedings.

When removed to the Conciergerie, preparatory to their trial, the astonishment of the captives was as great as when they entered the Luxembourg. "My late brethren," said Danton, "understand nothing of government; I leave every thing in the most deplorable confusion: 'Twere better to be a poor fisherman than the ruler of men. My only comfort is, that my name is attached to some decrees which will show that I was not involved in all their fury." On their trial, which began on the 2d and continued to the 5th April, they evinced their wonted firmness, and addressed the judges in unusual terms of indignation. Danton, being interrogated by the president concerning his age and profession, replied—"My name is Danton, sufficiently known in the history of the Revolution; I am thirty-five; my abode will soon be in nonentity; and my name will live in the pantheon of history." Camille Desmoulins answered—"I am of the same age as

the Sans-culotte Jesus Christ, when he died." Danton spoke with energy and resolution in his own defence. "My voice," said he, with that powerful organ which had been so often raised in the cause of the people, "will have no difficulty in refuting the calumnies contained in the act of accusation. Let the cowards who accuse me be brought forward; I will speedily cover them with confusion. Let the Committees appear; I require them both as accusers and judges. Let them appear; they will not. It matters little what judgment you pronounce; I have already told you my abode will soon be in nonentity; my life is a burden, I am weary of it, and will rejoice in the stroke that sends me to the grave." The president rang his bell, but Danton's voice of thunder drowned the noise. "Do you not hear me?" said the president. "The voice of a man," replied Danton, "who defends his honour and his life, may well overcome your clamours. Individual audacity may well be coerced; but national audacity, of which I have so often given proofs, that is necessary: it is permitted in revolutions. When I see myself so grievously, so unjustly accused, I am no longer master of my indignation.¹

"Is it for a revolutionist such as me, so strongly pronounced, so irrecoverably implicated, to defend myself against such charges as are now brought against me? Me sold to the court!—me the accomplice of Mirabeau, of D'Orleans, of Dumourier! Does not all the world know that I have combated Mirabeau, thwarted all his plans, defeated all his attempts against liberty? You, St Just, shall answer to posterity for such declamations directed against the best friend of the people—against the most ardent defender of liberty. In looking over this list of horror, I feel my very soul shudder." "Marat," interrupted the court, "was reduced to defend himself; but he did so without calumniating his accuser." "Have I not," resumed Danton, "done more in behalf of freedom than could be expected from any citizen? Did I not show myself, when they wished to withdraw the tyrant, in removing him to St Cloud? Have I not placarded in the district of the Cordeliers invitations to insurrection? Let my accusers appear, and I will plunge them into the obscurity from which they never should have been dragged.²

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¹ Bull. du
Trib. Rév.
Vol. iii. No.
21, p. 84.

101.
Danton's
defence.

² Bull. du
Trib. Rév.
Vol. iii. Nos.
24, 25, p. 92,
96. Hist
Parl. xxxii.
144, 156.

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1794.

Vile impostors, appeal! I will soon tear from you the mask which shields you from the public indignation. It is truly an astonishing thing the long blindness of the National Convention till this day on my conduct, and their sudden illumination!"

102.
Condemna-
tion of Dan-
ton and all
his party.
14th April.

After continuing in this manner for three days, during which his voice was sometimes so loud that it was heard across the Seine on the Quay de la Terraille,* Robespierre deemed it high time to bring the prosecution to a conclusion. The method adopted was the same as that which had proved fatal to the Girondists, viz.—the taking advantage of his influence in the Convention, which authorised the public accuser to obtain at the moment a decree, authorising the Revolutionary Tribunal to declare *hors des débats*, in other words, to condemn without further hearing, any accused party whom they deemed wanting in respect to the court. The austere indignation of Danton, the nerve of Desmoulins, the measured ability of Lacroix, rendered the judges apprehensive of a movement among the populace; to prevent which, the Convention, without hesitation, adopted the proposal. No sooner was this decree passed, than Amar hastened with it to the Tribunal, where Danton and his friends were prolonging their indignant defence.† "Here are the means," said Amar, "for stifling these wretches." Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser, seized it with avidity, and read it to the court, demanding, at the same time, the instant condemnation of the accused. Danton rose and called the audience to witness, that they had not been wanting in respect to the judges. "The time will come," said he, "when the truth will be known: I foresee the greatest calamities to France: here is the dictator unveiled." On the day following, the debates were closed before they had begun their defence, notwithstanding the most energetic remonstrance from

* "Les fenêtres du tribunal étaient ouvertes, et Danton poussait par momens de tels éclats de voix qu'ils parvinrent au de la Seine jusqu'aux curieux qui encombraient la Quai de la Terraille."—(The trial was in the Palais de Justice.)—*Hist. Parl.* xxxii. 164.

† "L'accusateur public a invité le greffier à faire lecture d'un décret tout récemment rendu par la Convention Nationale qui fait *hors des débats* tout accusé qui ne saurait pas respecter le Tribunal"—*Hist. Parl.* xxxii. 160. The decree itself was in these terms:—"La Convention Nationale decreète que tout prévenu de conspiration, qui se lèvera ou insultera à la justice nationale, sera mis hors des débats."—*Decree, 14th April 1794; Hist. Parl.* xxxii. 167.

Camille Desmoulins, who called the audience to witness that they were murdered. On the ground that the jury were now sufficiently enlightened, and that the third day of the trial had commenced, the public accuser refused to allow the witnesses whom Lacroix proposed to call to be examined, on the ground that, being members of the Convention, they could not be at once witnesses and accusers. "We are about," said Danton and Lacroix, "to be judged without being heard in our defence: deliberation is at an end. Well! we have lived long enough to go to rest on the bosom of glory: let them lead us to the scaffold." The jury were inclosed, and soon after the president returned, and, with a savage joy, declared the verdict was guilty. The court instantly pronounced sentence after they were removed, which was read to them in their cells in the evening. "We are sacrificed," said Danton, "to the ambition of a few dastardly brigands; but they will not long enjoy their triumph: I drag Robespierre after me in my fall."¹

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XIV.
1794.

¹ Bull. du
Trib. Rév.
No. 26, p.
102. Mig.
ii. 313. Lao.
ii. 146. Th.
vi. 201—212.
Hist. Parl.
xxxii. 161,
163.

They went to the scaffold with the stoicism so usual at that period. A numerous escort attended them, and an immense crowd was assembled, which beheld in silence their former leaders led out for execution. Camille Desmoulins exclaimed, when seated on the fatal chariot—"This, then, is the recompense destined to the first apostle of Liberty!" The base crowd who followed the cars loaded them with imprecations; the indignation of Camille Desmoulins at this proof of their mutability was so excessive that he tore his shirt; and though his hands were tied behind his back, his coat came off in venting it on the people. At the Palais Royal he said—"It is here that, four years ago, I called the people to arms for the Revolution. Had Marat lived, he would have been beside us." Danton held his head erect, and cast a calm and intrepid look around him. "Do not disquiet yourself," said he, "with that vile mob."* At the foot of the scaffold he advanced to embrace Hérault Sechelles, who held out his

103.
Their exe-
cution.

* "Longus deditorum ordo, septus armatis, per urbem incessit. Nemo supplicii vultu, sed tristes et truces adversum plausus ac lasciviam insultantis vulgi immobilis. Nihil quisquam locutus indignum, et quamquam inter adversa salva virtutis fama." How identical are the heroism of the brave and the baseness of the mob in every age! The words of Tacitus applied to the executions of Vitellius, might pass for a description of that of Danton and Camille Desmoulins.—See Tacitus, Hist. iv. 2.

CHAP. arms to receive him. The executioner interposed. "What!"
XIV. said he with a bitter smile, "are you more cruel than

1794.

1 Mig. II. 134

Lac. II. 146.

Th. VI. 216.

221. Hist.

de la Conv.

III. 347.

Deux Amis,

xii. 134, 136.

Duval, iv.

299, 301.

death itself? Begone! you at least cannot prevent our lips from soon meeting in that bloody basket." For a moment after, he was softened, and said—"Oh, my beloved! oh, my wife! oh, my children! shall I never see you more?" But immediately checking himself, he exclaimed—"Danton, recollect yourself; no weakness!" He ascended with a firm step, being, with the usual barbarity of the period, executed last, as the chief conspirator, and died with unshaken constancy.¹

The wife of Camille Desmoulins, a young woman of twenty-three, to whom he was passionately attached, wandered round the prison of the Luxembourg, in which her husband was confined, night and day during his detention. This, with some hints dropped in the jails by the prisoners, as to their hopes of being delivered by the aid of the people, during the excitement produced by the trial of Danton and his friends, led to a fresh prosecution for a "conspiracy in the prisons," which was made the means of sweeping off twenty-five persons of wholly different principles and parties at one fell swoop. The apostate bishop Gobel, Chaumette, the well-known and once formidable prosecutor of the municipality, the widow of Hébert, the widow of Camille Desmoulins, Arthur Dillon, a remnant of the Dantonists, and twenty others of inferior note, were indicted together for the crimes of having "conspired together against the liberty and security of the French people, endeavoured to trouble the state by civil war, to arm the citizens against each other, and against the lawful authority; in virtue of which they proposed, in the present month, to dissolve the national representation, assassinate its members, destroy the republican government, gain possession of the sovereignty of the people, and give a tyrant to the state." The absurdity of thus charging, as in one conspiracy, the leaders of two opposite factions, so recently at daggers-drawing with each other—Gobel and Chaumette, the partisans of anarchy and blood, with Dillon and the widow of Desmoulins, who had been exposing their lives to procure a return to humanity—produced no impression on the inexorable tribunal. They were all condemned after a long trial,

104.

Alleged
conspiracy
in the pri-
sons, and
numerous
executions
under it.

and the vital difference between them appeared in their last moments. The infamous Gobel wept from weakness; the atrocious Chaumette was almost lifeless from terror; but the widow of Desmoulins exhibited on the scaffold the heroism of Madame Roland and Charlotte Corday, and died rejoicing in the hope of rejoining her lost husband.* Thus perished the tardy but last defenders of humanity and moderation—the last who sought for peace, and advocated clemency toward those who had been vanquished in the Revolution.¹

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¹ Bull. du
Trib. Rév.
Hist. Parl.
xxxii. 245,
30.

For long after their fall, no voice was heard against the Reign of Terror: silent and unopposed, the tyrants struck redoubled blows from one end of France to the other. The Girondists had sought to prevent that fatal rule, the Dantonists to arrest it: both perished in the attempt. They perished, because they were inferior in wickedness to their opponents; they fell, the victims of the little humanity which lingered in their bosoms. The combination of wicked men who thereafter governed France, is

105:
Silent pro-
scriptions of
the Reign of
Terror.

* The letters written by Camille Desmoulins to his wife, during his imprisonment and the night before his execution, are among the most interesting and pathetic monuments of the Revolution, opening as it were a glance into that awful amount of sorrow and wretchedness which that convulsion brought even upon its earliest and most ardent supporters. They are preserved in the *Histoire Parlementaire*, and the following extracts will convey some idea of their heart-rending affection:—"Ma chère Lucile, ma Vesta, mon ange, ma destinée ramène dans ma prison mes yeux sur ce jardin où je passais huit années de ma vie à te voir—une coin de vue sur le Luxembourg me rappelle une foule de souvenirs de nos amours. Je suis au secret, mais jamais je n'ai été par la pensée, par l'imagination, presque par le toucher, plus près de toi, de ta mère, de mon petit Horace. Ma justification est tout entière, dans mes huit volumes républicaines. O ma bonne Lulotte! parlons des autres choses. Je me jette à vos genoux; j'étends les bras pour t'embrasser—je ne trouve plus mon pauvre Lulotte! [Ici on remarque la trace d'une larme.] Envoie-moi le verre où il y a un C et un D—nos deux noms—un livre en 12 que j'ai acheté à Charpentier: ce livre roule sur l'immortalité de l'âme. J'ai besoin de me persuader qu'il y a un Dieu plus juste que les hommes, et que je ne puis manquer à te revoir. Adieu, Lucile!—adieu! Je ne puis pas vous embrasser: mais aux larmes que je verse, il me semble que je vous tiens encore contre mon sein." [Ici se trouve la trace d'une seconde larme.]—*Seconde Lettre*.—"Je suis malade; je n'ai mangé que ta soupe depuis hier. Le Ciel a eu pitié de mon innocence; il m'a envoyé une songe, où je vous ai vus tous: envoie-moi tes cheveux et ton portrait—oh, je t'en prie! car je pense uniquement à toi, et jamais à l'affaire qui m'amène ici!"—*Dernière Lettre*.—"Je te conjure, Lulotte, par nos éternelles amours, envoie-moi ton portrait! Dans l'horreur de ma prison, ce sera pour moi une fête, un jour d'ivresse et de ravissement—celui où je reverrai ton portrait. En attendant envoie-moi de tes cheveux, au temps de nos premières amours, où quelque un m'interrogeait par cela seul qu'il sortait de chez toi. Hier, quand le citoyen qui t'a porté ma lettre fut revenu, je me surprenais à le regarder comme s'il fut resté sur ses habits quelque chose de ta présence, quelque chose de toi. Hier

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without a parallel in the history of the world.* Their power, based on the organised weight of the multitude, and the ardent co-operation of the municipalities, every where installed by them in the possession of power, was irresistible. By them opulent cities were overturned; hundreds of thousands of deluded artisans reduced to beggary; agriculture, commerce, the arts destroyed; the foundations of every species of property shaken, and all the youth of the kingdom driven to the frontier, less to uphold the integrity of France, than to protect themselves from the just vengeance which awaited them from within and without. All bowed the neck before this gigantic assemblage of wickedness. The revolutionary excesses daily increased, in consequence of the union which the constant dread of retribution produced among their perpetrators. There was no medium between taking a part in these atrocities, and falling a victim to them. Virtue seemed powerless; energy appeared only in the extremity of resignation; religion in the heroism with which death was endured. There was not a hope left for France, had it not been for the dissensions which, as the natural result of their wickedness, sprang up among the authors of the public calamities.¹

¹ Deux
Ann., xii.
184, 192.
Hist. de la
Conv. iii.
230.

J'ai découvert une fente dans mon appartement; j'ai appliqué mon oreille—j'ai entendu la voix d'un malade qui souffrait. Il m'a demandé mon nom: je lui ai dit. 'O mon Dieu!' s'écrie; et j'ai reconnu distinctement la voix de Fabre d'Eglantine! Si c'était Pitt ou Cobourg qui me traitassent si durement! mais mes collègues, mais Robespierre, qui m'a signé l'ordre de mon cachot! mais la République, après tout que j'ai fait pour elle! C'est le prix que je reçois de tout ce que j'ai fait pour elle! J'avais rêvé une république que tout le monde eût adoré. Je n'ai pu croire que les hommes fussent si féroces et si injustes. Malgré mon supplice, je crois qu'il y a un Dieu. Je te reverrai un jour. O Lucile! O Annette! Sensible comme je l'étais, la mort qui me délivre de la vue de tant de crimes—est-elle un si grand malheur? Adieu, Lucile! Adieu, ma vie!—mon âme!—ma divinité sur la terre! Je te laisse de bons amis, tout ce qu'il y a d'hommes vertueux et sensibles. Adieu, Lucile! ma Lucile! ma chère Lucile! Adieu, Horace—Anier—Adèle! Adieu, mon père! Je sens fuir devant moi le rivage de la vie. Je vois encore Lucile! Je te vois, ma bien-aimée—ma Lucile! Mes mains liées t'embrassent, et ma tête séparée repose encore sur toi ses yeux mourans!" Here is the pathos of nature! When will romance or poetry figure any thing so touching?—See *Hist. Parlementaire*.

* "Orrida maestà nel fero aspetto

Terror accresce, e più superbo il rende;

Rosseggian gli occhi, e di veneno infetto,

Come infausta cometa, il guardo splende.

Gl'involge il mento, e sull'irato petto

Ispira folta la gran barba scende;

E il volto di voragine profonda

Mostra la bocca d'atro sangue immonda."

Gerusalemme Liberata, iv. 7.

It is impossible not to be struck, in looking back on the fate of these different parties, with the singular and providential manner in which their crimes brought about their own punishment. No foreign interposition was necessary ; no avenging angel was required to vindicate the justice of the Divine administration. They fell the victims of their own atrocity, of the passions which they themselves had let loose, of the injustice of which they had given the first example to others. The Constitutionalists overthrew the ancient monarchy, and raised a throne surrounded by Republican institutions ; but their imprudence in rousing popular ambition paved the way for the 10th August, and speedily brought themselves to the scaffold : the Girondists established their favourite dream of a Republic, and were the first victims of the fury which it excited : the Dantonists roused the populace against the Gironde, and soon fell under the axe which they had prepared for their rivals : the Anarchists defied the powers of Heaven itself, but scarcely were their blasphemies uttered when they were swept off by the partners of their bloody triumphs. One only power remained, alone, terrible, irresistible. This was the power of DEATH, wielded by a faction steeled against every feeling of humanity, dead to every principle of justice. In their iron hands, order resumed its sway from the influence of terror ; obedience became universal from the extinction of hope. Silent and unresisted they led their victims to the scaffold, dreaded alike by the soldiers who crouched, the people who trembled, and the victims who suffered. The history of the world has no parallel to the horrors of that long night of suffering, because it has none to the guilt which preceded it ; tyranny never assumed so hideous a form, because licentiousness never required so severe a punishment.

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106.

General reflections on the successive destruction of the Revolutionists.

“ Die weltgeschichte ist das weltgericht.”

• “ The world’s history is the judgment of the world.”—SCHILLER.

CHAPTER XV.

REIGN OF TERROR—FROM THE DEATH OF DANTON TO THE
FALL OF ROBESPIERRE.—APRIL 5—JULY 27, 1794.

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1.

Efforts of
vice to con-
ceal its own
deformity.

1 Napoleon,
li. p. 274.

"ALL bad actions," says Sallust, "spring from good beginnings:"—"And the progress of these events," says Machiavel, "is this, that in their efforts to avoid fear, men inspire it in others, and that injury which they seek to ward off themselves they throw upon their neighbours, so that it seems inevitable either to give or receive offence."* "You are quite wrong," said Napoleon to Talma, "in the representation of Nero; you should conceal the tyrant; *no man admits his wickedness either to others or himself.* You and I speak history, but we speak it like other men."¹ The words which Sallust puts into the mouth of Cæsar, and Napoleon addressed to the actor of Nero, point to the same, and one of the most important principles of human nature. When vice appears in its native deformity, it is universally shunned—its features are horrible alike to others and itself.† It is by borrowing the language, and rousing the passions of virtue, that it insinuates itself into the minds, not only of the spectators but the actors; the worst deeds are committed by men who delude themselves and others by the noblest expressions. Tyranny speaks with the voice of prudence, and points to the dangers of popular insurrec-

* "Omnia mala exempla," says Sallust, "bonis initiis orta sunt."—"E l'ordine di questi accidenti," says Machiavel, "è che mentre che gli uomini cercano di non temere, cominciano a fare temere altrui, e quella injuria che gli scacciano di loro, la pongono sopra un altro, come se fusse necessario, offendere o esser offeso."

† "Look at that monster of such hideous mien,
Whom nature's God has so created needs but to be seen;
How oft, familiar with his face,
We smile, and then pity, then embrace."—POPE.

tion ; ambition strikes on the chords of patriotism and loyalty, and leads men to ruin others in the belief that they are saving themselves ; democratic fury appeals to the spirit of freedom, and massacres thousands in the name of insurgent humanity. In all these cases men would shrink with horror from themselves if their conduct appeared in its true colours ; they become steeped in crime while yet professing the intentions of virtue, and before they are well aware that they have transgressed its bounds.

All these atrocities proceed from one source ; criminality in them all begins when one line is passed. This source is the principle of expedience ; this line is the line of justice. "To do evil that good may come of it," is perhaps the most prolific cause of wickedness. It is absolutely necessary, say the politicians of one age, to check the growing spirit of heresy ; discord in this world, damnation in the next, follow in its steps ; religion, the fountain of peace, is in danger of being polluted by its poison ; the transient suffering of a few individuals will insure the eternal salvation of millions. Such is the language of religious intolerance, such the principle which lighted the fires of Smithfield. How cruel soever it may appear, say the statesmen of another age, to sacrifice life for property, it is indispensable in an age of commercial industry ; the temptations to fraud are so great, the facilities of commission so extensive, that, but for the terror of death, property would be insecure, and industry, with all its blessings, nipped in the bud. Such is the language of commercial jealousy, and the origin of that sanguinary code which the humanity and extended wisdom of England has now perhaps too far relaxed. You would not hesitate, say the leaders of another period, to sacrifice a hundred thousand men in a single campaign, to preserve a province, or conquer a frontier town ; but what are the wars of princes to the eternal contest between freedom and tyranny ? and what the destruction of its present enemies, to the liberty of unborn millions of the human race ? Such is the language of revolutionary cruelty ; these the maxims which, beginning with the enthusiasm of philanthropists, ended in the rule of Robespierre. The unexampled atrocities of the Reign of Terror arose from the influence yielded to a single

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2.

Origin of the
atrocities of
the Reign of
Terror.

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3.

It springs
from sacri-
ficing jus-
tice to sup-
posed ex-
pedience.

principle; the greatest crimes which the world has ever known, were but an extension of the supposed expedience which hangs for forgery and burns for heresy.

The error in all these cases is the same, and consists in supposing that what is unjust ever can be ultimately expedient, or that the Author of Nature would have implanted feelings in the human heart which the interests of society require to be continually violated. "A little knowledge," says Lord Bacon, "makes men irreligious, but extended wisdom brings them back to devotion." With equal truth it may be said, that "a little experience makes governments and people iniquitous, but extended information brings them back to the principles of justice." The real interests of society, it is at last perceived, can only be secured by those measures which command universal concurrence; and none can finally do this but such as are founded on the virtuous feelings of our nature. It is by attending only to the *first effect* of unjust measures that men are ever deceived on this subject; when their ultimate consequences come to be appreciated, the expedience is found all to lie on the other side. But these ultimate effects often do not appear for a considerable period, and hence the *immediate* danger of revolutions, and the extreme difficulty of arresting their course. The stoppage, however, is certain at last. When the feelings of the great body of mankind are outraged by the measures of government, a reaction invariably, sooner or later, follows, and the temporary advantages of injustice are more than counterbalanced by the permanent dissatisfaction which it occasions. The surest guide, it is at length discovered, is to be found in the inward monitor which nature has implanted in every human heart; and statesmen are taught by experience, that true wisdom consists in following what their conscience tells them to be just, in preference to what their limited experience, or mistaken views, may apprehend to be expedient.

4.

Great error
of dramat-
ists and no-
velists in
this respect.

Novelists and writers of the drama would do well to reflect on these observations. They constantly represent their depraved characters as *admitting their wickedness*, but expressing their determination to adhere to it. This never occurs in real life. Men often admit the performance of, or profess an intention to perform, actions which the

world calls wicked: but *they never admit they are wicked*. Invariably they speak of them as perfectly justifiable, or a commendable escape from absurd or iniquitous restraint. The libertine will avow all his deeds of perfidy, nay, he will glory in them; but he never admits they are wrong: on the contrary, he maintains they were no more than the dictates of nature, and that hypocritical cant alone can make them the subject of condemnation. The fraudulent bankrupt may not deny his deeds of deceit; but as long as he perseveres in his career, he represents them only as clever devices, indicating a superiority in the conduct of affairs over other men. The thief often admits his depredations, nay, he magnifies their number and dexterity; but while he remains a thief he never drops a hint as to their being criminal. The tyrant may, in a soliloquy, confess his cruel projects; but he never confesses they are cruel. State necessity, overruling destiny, are ever in his mouth; he is only watching over the safety of the commonwealth; he is anticipating or warding off the strokes of the traitor. Milton represents Satan justifying his temptation of our First Parents even amidst the innocence of Paradise. "Necessity, the tyrant's plea," was already in his mouth.*

The works of many of the greatest dramatists and romance-writers of modern times are characterised by this remarkable error—Racine and Molière, Alfieri and Scott, Lope de Vega and Bulwer, with all their profound knowledge of the human heart, have fallen into it.† Yet deeper observers of human nature have perceived the real character of man in this respect. Shakspeare draws, with a master's hand, the self-delusion of the human heart, and the *struggle* in the breast of the incipient criminal. Corneille represents his heroes justifying all their excesses on the grounds of

5.
Examples
of this.

- * "And should I at your harmless innocences
Melt as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarged,
By conquering this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damned, I should abhor.
So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds."

Paradise Lost, iv. 389.

† It is in an especial manner conspicuous in Alfieri. Madame de Staël was of the same opinion: "Il y a dans les pièces d'Alfieri une telle profusion d'énergie et de magnanimité, ou bien une telle exagération de violence et du crime, qu'il est impossible de reconnaître le véritable caractère d'hommes. Ils n'ont jamais ni si méchants ni si généreux qu'il les peint."—CORINNE, l. vii. c. 2.

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state necessity; it was on this account that Napoleon said, if he had lived in his time, he would have made him his first councillor of state. Euripides and Sophocles exhibit the cruel deeds of their characters as overborne by irresistible destiny. Machiavel holds forth state policy as justifying deeds of wickedness to such an extent, that subsequent ages have been doubtful whether he did not intend to vindicate them altogether. It is no doubt very convenient for a dramatist, to represent his atrocious characters as laying bare their atrocity in conversation with confidants and in soliloquies; but no man ever met with this in real life. Those who look for it in the world will be constantly disappointed. Among the innumerable criminals whom the French Revolution warmed into life, there is not one who ever approached even to an admission that he had done wrong in the course of it. The same plea was Cromwell's apology for the murder of Charles I.* He knew the human heart well who said—"The heart is *deceitful above all things*, and desperately wicked."

The truth of these principles was strongly exemplified in the later stages of the French Revolution. During the four months which elapsed between the death of Danton and the fall of Robespierre, DEATH became the sole engine of government; systematic and daily executions took place in the capital; extermination, conducted by despotic agents, prevailed in the provinces—and yet nothing but the language of philanthropy was breathed in the Convention, nothing but the noblest sentiments were uttered by the Decemvirs. Each defeat of their rivals only rendered the ruling faction more sanguinary. The successive proscriptions of the Royalists, of the Girondists, of the Constitutionals, of the Anarchists, and of the Moderates, were immediately followed by a more violent effusion of human blood, and a more vehement profession of the principles of humanity. The destinies of France, as of every other country which undergoes the crisis of a revolution, had fallen into the hands of men, who, born of the public convulsions, were sustained by them alone: they massacred in the name of their principles, they

6.
Principles
of Robes-
pierre's go-
vernment
after the fall
of Danton.

* On the evening after the execution of that monarch, he walked round the corpse in Whitehall, muffled up in a long black cloak, repeating to himself the words, "Dreadful necessity."—See *Europ. Mag.* xx. 106; and *Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons*, i. 254.

prepared a report on the suppression of mendicity, and the means of relieving the indigent poor. Robespierre had now reached the zenith of his popularity with his faction; he was denominated the Great Man of the Republic; his virtue, his genius, his eloquence, were in every mouth. The speech which he made on this occasion was one of the most remarkable of his whole career. "The idea," said he, "of a Supreme Being, and of the immortality of the soul, is a continual call to justice; it is therefore a social and republican principle. Who has authorised you to declare that the Deity does not exist? Oh, you who support in such impassioned strains so arid a doctrine, what advantage do you expect to derive from the principle that a blind fatality regulates the affairs of men, and that the soul is nothing but a breath of air impelled towards the tomb? Will the idea of annihilation inspire man with more pure and elevated sentiments than that of immortality? Will it awaken more respect for others or himself, more courage to resist tyranny, greater contempt for pleasure or death? You who regret a virtuous friend, can you endure the thought that his noblest part has not escaped dissolution? You who weep over the remains of a child or a wife, are you consoled by the thought that a handful of dust is all that remains of the beloved object? You, the unfortunate, who expire under the strokes of an assassin, is not your last voice raised to appeal to the justice of the Most High? Innocence on the scaffold, supported by such thoughts, makes the tyrant turn pale on his triumphal car. Could such an ascendant be felt, if the tomb levelled alike the oppressor and his victim?

"Observe how, on all former occasions, tyrants have sought to stifle the idea of the immortality of the soul. With what art did Caesar, when pleading in the Roman Senate in favour of the accomplices of Catiline, endeavour to throw doubts on the belief of its immortality; while Cicero invokes against the traitor the sword of the laws and the vengeance of Heaven! Socrates, on the verge of death, discoursed with his friends on the ennobling theme; Leonidas, at Thermopylae, on the eve of executing the most heroic design ever conceived by man, invited his companions to a banquet in another world. The principles of the Stoics gave birth to Brutus and Cato, even in the

calamity had rendered men suspicious even of those they loved the most.

XV.
CHAP.

Non ausus clunisse palam; vox nulla dolori
Credita; sed quantum, volucres cum bruma coequet.
Rura silent, mediusque jacet sine murmure pontus.
Tanta quies." 6

1794.

Every one assumed the coarsest dress, and the most equalled appearance; an elegant exterior would have been the certain forerunner of destruction. At one hour only were any symptoms of animation to be seen; it was when the victims were conveyed to execution. The humane died with horror from the sight; the infuriated rushed in crowds to satiate their eyes with the spectacle of human agony. Night came, but with it no diminution of the anxiety of the people. Every family early gazed round the members; with trembling looks they gazed round the room, fearful that the very walls might harbour traitors.† The sound of a foot, the stroke of a hammer, a voice in the street, froze all hearts with horror. If a knock was heard at the door, every one in agonised suspense expected his fate. Unable to endure such protracted misery, numbers committed suicide. "Had the reign of Robespierre," says Féron, "continued longer, multitudes would have thrown themselves under the guillotine; the first of social affections, the love of life, was already extinguished in almost every heart."

11 Lac. II. 151.
152 Toul.
153 236.
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200 236.

In the midst of these unparalleled atrocities, the Convention were occupied with the establishment of the civic virtues. Robespierre pronounced a discourse on the qualities suited to a republic. He dedicated a certain number of the decennial fêtes to the Supreme Being, to Truth, to Justice, to Modesty, to Friendship, to Frugality, to Good Faith, to Glory, and to Immortality! Bâre

* Lucan, *Pharsalia*, l. 258.

† "Omni le stragi,

Le violenze, le rapine, l'onte,
Bon lieve male; il pessimo è dei mali."
L'alto tremor, che i cuori tutti ingombrava:
Non che parlar, neppure osan mirarsi
T'un l'altro in volto i cittadini incerti:
Tanto è il sospetto e il diffidar, che tremava
Del fratello il fratello, del figlio il padre:
Corrotti i villi, immemorati i buoni,
Negletti i dubbj, trucidati i prodi,
Ed avviliti tutti: ecco quasi sono
Quel già superbi cittadini di Roma.
Terror fuora, oggi d'Italia scherno

ALFIERI, *Virginia*, Act III. scene 2.

23.
Robes-
pierre's
speech on
the Supreme
Being.
May 7.

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XV.
1794.

tors was in a peculiar manner excited by the bands of females led out together to execution; fourteen young women of Verdun, of the most attractive forms, were cut off together. "The day after their execution," says Rioulle, "the court of the prison looked like a garden bereaved of its flowers by a tempest." (On another occasion, twenty women of Poitou, chiefly the wives of peasants, were placed together on the chariot; some died on the way, and the wretches gullied their lifeless remains; one kept her infant in her bosom till she reached the foot of the scaffold; the executioners tore the innocent from her breast, as she sucked it for the first time, and the screams of maternal agony were only stifled with her life. In removing the prisoners from the jail of the Maison Lazare, one of the women declared herself with child, and on the point of delivery; the hard-hearted jailers compelled her to move on; she did so, uttering piercing shrieks, and at length fell on the ground, and was delivered of an infant in presence of her persecutors.*

Rioulle, 85.
Tableau, Hist. de la
Maison
Lazare, Rév.
Mém. xxiii.
226.

Such accumulated horrors annihilated all the charities and intercourse of life. Before daybreak the shops of the provision merchants were besieged by hordes of women and children clamouring for the food which the law of the *maximum* in general prevented them from obtaining. The farmers trembled to bring their fruits to the market, the shopkeepers to expose them to sale. The richest quarters of the town were deserted; no equipages or crowds of passengers were to be seen on the streets; the sinister words, *Propriété Nationale*, imprinted in large characters on the walls, every where showed how far the work of confiscation had proceeded. Passengers hesitated to address their most intimate friends on meeting; the extent of

Breadstuf
espionage in
Paris, and
the other
towns.

" Dans une de ces translations imaginées pour molester les malheureux prisonniers, Dumoutier se présenta à quatre heures de matin, suivi d'un chariot au terme de sa promenade, ayant été éveillé sans ménagement; ressentit une commotion subite qui lui présagea son prochain accablement; elle demanda de rester quelques jours; on l'accusa de feinte, d'impudence; elle ne fut pas écoutée; ses prières restèrent, ses sollicitations de ses compagnons—tout fut inutile; il fallut acheter avec les autres. Cette jeune infortunée se traîna donc, soutenue par quelques hommes, jetant des cris de douleur et de désespoir; à peine a-t-elle traversé le jardin et atteint le seuil de la porte que la crise redouble; on n'a que le temps de l'introduire dans une chambre voisine; elle tombe sur un lit, et accouche en présence de ce barbare, de ses sœurs, et de toute la maison."—*Tableaux de la Maison Lazare*, p. 226, vol. xxiii.; Rév. Mém.

what are called the straw chambers or in the dungeons. Thus poverty is there regarded as a fresh crime, and leads to the most dreadful punishment; for a lengthened abode in these horrid receptacles is worse than death itself. The dungeons are never opened but for inspection, to give food to the prisoners, or empty the vases. The superior class of chambers called the straw apartments, do not differ from the dungeons, except in this, that their inhabitants are permitted to go out at eight in the morning, and to remain out till an hour before sunset. During the intervening period, they are allowed to walk in the court, or huddle together in the galleries which surround it, where they are suffocated by infected odours. There is the same accumulation of horror in their sleeping chambers: no air, rotten straw, and perhaps fifty prisoners thrust into one hole, with their heads lying on their own filth, surtopped by every species of dirt and contagion. Nor were these disgusting circumstances the only degradation which awaited the unhappy prisoners. No one could conceive the woful state to which the human species can be reduced, who had not witnessed the calling of the roll in the evening, when three or four turnkeys, each with half a dozen fierce dogs held in a leash, call the unhappy prisoners to answer to their names, threatening, swearing, and insulting, while they are supplicating, weeping, imploring: often they ordered them to go out and come in three or four times over, till they were satisfied that the trembling troop was complete. The cells for the women were as horrid as those for the men, equally dark, humid, filthy, crowded, and suffocating: and it was there that all the rank and beauty of Paris was assembled." 1

It was three in the afternoon when the melancholy procession set out from the Conciergerie; the troop slowly passed through the vaulted passages of the prison, amidst crowds of captives, who gazed with insatiable avidity on the aspect of those about to undergo a fate which might so soon become their own. The higher orders in general behaved with firmness and serenity; silently they marched to death, with their eyes fixed on the heavens, lest their looks should betray their indignation. Numbers of the lower class pitiously bewailed their fate, and called heaven and earth to witness their innocence. The pity of the specta-

And of the captives who set out for execution.

1 Tableau des Prisons de Paris pendant la Terreur, l. 17, 19. Hist. de la Convention, III. 383, 388.

lage." Many monsters made their fortunes by this infamous robbery. A bed of straw alone awaited them when they arrived in their wretched cells: the heat was such, from the multitudes thrust into them, that they were to be seen crowding to the windows, with pale and cadaverous countenances, striving through the bars to inhale the fresh air. Fathers and mothers, surrounded by their weeping children, were locked in each other's arms, in agonies of grief, when the fatal hour of separation arrived. The parents were in general absorbed in the solemn reflections which the near approach of death seldom fails to awaken; but the children, with frantic grief, clung with their little hands round their necks, and loudly implored to be placed, still embraced in each other's arms, under the guillotine.

The condition of the prisoners in these jails of Paris was dreadful beyond what imagination could conceive.

"No light; but rather darkness visible
 Begged only to discover sights of woe,
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
 And rest can never dwell; hope never comes,
 That comes to all; but torture without end
 Still urges." *

The following description is from an eyewitness of these horrors: the fastidiousness of modern manners may revolt at some of its details; but the truth of history requires that they should be recorded. "From the outer room, where examinations are conducted, you enter by two enormous doors into the dungeons: infected and damp abodes, where large rats carry on a continual war against the unhappy wretches who are there accumulated together, gnawing their ears, noses, and clothing, and depriving them of a moment's respite even by sleep. Hardly ever does daylight penetrate into these gloomy abodes: the straw which composes the litter of the prisoners soon becomes rotten from want of air, and from the ordure and excrement with which it is covered; and such is the stench thence arising, that a stranger on entering the door feels as if he were suffocating. The prisoners are all either in

leurs terribles et leurs dégoûtantes propos: les plus jeunes furent déshabillés, foulées; la cupidité satanique, la lubricité aveugle; et ces infortunées, les yeux baissés, éplorées devant ces bandits, ne pouvaient cacher à leurs yeux ce que la pudeur même dérobe à l'amour trop heureux. Cet affreux brigandage a fait le fortune de ces monstres."

—*Tableaux des Prisons de Paris pendant la Terreur*, 1797, vol. II. 84.

* *Paradise Lost*, l. 63.

1794.

1 Tableau

des Prisons
 de Paris
 pendant la
 Terreur, II.
 83, 87.
 Deux Amls.
 XII. 204, 207.

20
 Rightful
 condition of
 the prison-
 ers in the
 jails.

on the following morning sent out to execution. Night and day the cars incessantly discharged victims into the prisons: weeping mothers and trembling orphans, gray-haired sires and youthful innocents, were thrust in without mercy with the brave and the powerful: the young, the beautiful, the unfortunate, seemed in a peculiar manner the prey of the assassins. Nor were the means of emptying the prisons augmented in a less fearful progression. Fifteen only were at first placed on the chariot, but their number was soon augmented to thirty, and gradually rose to eighty persons, who daily were sent forth to the place of execution; when the fall of Robespierre put a stop to the murders, arrangements had been made for increasing it to one hundred and fifty.* An immense aqueduct, to remove the gore, had been dug from the Seine as far as the Place St Antoine, where latterly the executions took place; and four men were daily employed in emptying the blood of the victims into that reservoir.†

The female prisoners, on entering the jails, and frequently during the course of their detention, were subjected to indignities so shocking, that they were often worse than death itself. Under the pretence of searching for concealed articles, money, or jewels, they were obliged to undress in presence of their brutal jailers, who, if they were young or handsome, subjected them to scratches of the most rigorous and revolting description.‡ This process was so common that it acquired a name, and was called "Rapio-

* "Ils avaient tout disposé pour en envoyer cent-cinquante à la fois à la place du supplice. Déjà un aqueduc immense, qui devait voler du sang, avait été creusé à la Place St Antoine. Tous les jours le sang d'humain ne pulsait par seaux, et quatre hommes étoient occupés au moment de l'écarter à les vider dans cet aqueduc."—Riotière, sur les Prisons, 84; *Mémoires*, xliii. 84.

† "A' ποί ποτ' ηγάγες με; ποός ποίως εστύνη; Ἰδὸς τὴν Ἀτρείδαν, εἰ οὐκ ἐν τοῖς εὐνοῖσι.

Μισέθων μὲν μὴ, πολλα δὲ οὐκ ὀφείδοντα

Ἀντοφὸν κακα κακα ἀπταλαί

Ἀνδρὸς σφαιρεῖον καὶ πῆδον γαστήρην."—

Ætnerius, Agam. 1098.

"Whither do you lead me? To whatbourne? To the house of the Atreides, if you do not already know it—dwellings abhorred of Heaven—human shame hours, and floor blood-be-spattered." Verily, says Bulwer, † "La prisonnière en entrant est fouillée, volée: on ne lui laisse que son mouchoir, coussin, chapeau, argent, assiglat, or, et bijoux—tout est pris: vous entrez nud et dépourvée. Ce brigandage s'appelle rapioier. Les femmes offraient à la brutalité des géoliers tout ce que pouvait éveiller.

CHAP. XV. composed a beautiful ode, which was sung in chorus by the whole prisoners, and repeated, with a slight variation, after his execution.* At other times the scene changed; in the midst of their ravings the prisoners first destined for the scaffold were transported by the Phædon of Plato and the death of Socrates; infidelity in its last moments belook itself with delight to the sublime belief of the immortality of the soul. The prisoners, whose hearts were overflowing with domestic sorrow, were in a peculiar manner open to the generous emotions; friendship-ships were formed in a few hours; common dangers excited a universal and mutual sympathy; even the passions of love were often felt on the verge of the tomb. The affections, continually called forth, flowed with uncommon warmth; their mutual fate excited among the prisoners the strongest feelings of commiseration; and nothing astonished the few who escaped from confinement so much as the want of sympathy for the sufferings of mankind which generally prevailed in the world.

From the furthest extremities of France crowds of prisoners daily arrived at the gates of the Conciergerie, which successively sent forth its bands of victims to the scaffold. Grey hairs, and youthful forms; countenances blooming with health, and faces worn with suffering; beauty and talent, rank and virtue, were indiscriminately rolled together to the fatal doors. With truth might have been written over their portals what Dante placed over the entrance of the infernal regions:—

"Per me si va nella città dolente,
Per me si va nell' eterno dolore,
Per me si va tra la perduta gente.

Lascatte ogni speranza, o voi che entrate."†

Sixty persons often arrived in a day, and as many were

* In the transport of the moment another exclaimed in extempore verse—

"Amis! Combien il y a d'attraites
L'instant où s'unissent nos âmes!
Le cœur juste est toujours en paix;
O doux plaisir qui n'eut jamais
L'ambitieux avec ses trahisons!

Venez. Bourreaux! nous sommes prêts."

† "Through me you pass into the city of woe;
Through me you pass into eternal pain;
Through me among the people lost for aye;

All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

PARADISE, Inferno, III. l.

Picture of
the prisons
during this
period.

1 Route,
108, 111,
Th. vi. 390.
Tulian des
Prisons, l.
21, 47, 57.

1794.

provisions for themselves; and to prevent the possibility of their doing so, a rigorous search was made for money of every description, which was all taken from the captives. Some were even denied the sad consolation of bearing their misfortunes together; and to the terrors of solitary confinement were added those of death, which daily became more urgent and inevitable. The prodigious crowds which were thrust into the prisons, far exceeding all possible accommodation, produced the most frightful filth in some places, the most insupportable crowding in all. Amidst the scanty fare, deep depression, accumulated filth, and universal crowding of those gloomy abodes, contagion made rapid progress, and mercifully relieved many from their sufferings. But this only aggravated the sufferings of the survivors; the bodies were overlooked, or forgotten, and often not removed for days together. Not content with the real terrors which they presented, the ingenuity of the jailers was exerted to produce imaginary anxiety; the long nights were frequently interrupted by visits from the executioners, solely intended to excite alarm; the few hours of sleep allowed to the victims were broken by the rattling of chains, and unbarring of doors, to induce the belief that their fellow-prisoners were about to be led to the scaffold; and the warrants for death against eighty persons in one place of confinement, were made the means of keeping six hundred in agony.¹

Despair of life, recklessness of the future, produced their usual effects on the unhappy crowd of captives. Some sank into sullen indifference; others indulged in immoderate gaiety, and sought to amuse life even at the foot of the scaffold. The greater part walked about unable to bear the torture of thought when sitting still: few remained at rest.

"Supin giaceva in terra alcuna gente;

Alcuna al sedea tutta raccolta,

Ed altra andava continuamente.

Quella che riva intornò era più molta;

E quella che riva intornò era più molta;

Bia più al duolo avea la lingua sciolta."

"On the earth some lay supine,

Some crouching close were seated, others paced

Incessantly around; the latter tribe

More numerous; those fewer who beneath

The torment lay, but louder in their grief."

Dante, *Inferno*, xiv. 22.

¹ Tableau des Prisons de Paris pendant la Terreur, t. 11, p. 149, et. 18, 149, 150, 319, 320, 358, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

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15. To support these violent measures, the utmost care was taken to preserve in full vigour the democratic spirit in the Club of the Jacobins, the centre of the Revolutionary action throughout France. By successive purifications, as

away the municipality and the departments.¹ Eight thousand prisoners were soon accumulated in the different places of confinement in Paris; the number throughout France exceeded two hundred thousand. The condition of such a multitude of captives was necessarily miserable in the extreme; the prisons of the Conciergerie, of the Force, and the Mairie, were more horrible than any in Europe. All the comforts which, during the first months of the Reign of Terror, were allowed to the captives of fortune, were withdrawn. Such luxuries, it was said, were an insupportable indulgence to the rich aristocrats, while, without the prison walls, the poor were starving for want. In consequence they established refectories, where the whole prisoners, of whatever rank or sex, were allowed only the coarsest and most unwholesome fare. None were permitted to purchase better

was manifested, Robespierre was sent for, and his terrible voice soon stifled the expression of discontent.

To accomplish the regeneration of the social body, the Triumvirate proceeded with gigantic energy, and displayed the most consummate ability. For two months after the fall of Danton, they laboured incessantly to confirm their power. Their commissioners spread terror through the departments, and communicated the requisite impulse to the affiliated Jacobin clubs, which alone now remained in existence. These clubs secured the elections of all the magistrates and public functionaries in their interest. The utmost pains were taken to render all the authorities of government energetic in spreading terror in every direction, by sternly shutting out the feelings of mercy.*

The National Guard was universally devoted to their will, and proved the ready instrument of the most sanguinary measures. The armies, victorious on every side, warmly supported their energetic administration, and made the frontiers resound with the praise of the government. Strong in the support of such powerful bodies, the fanatic leaders of the Revolution boldly and universally began the work of extermination. The mandates of death issued from the capital, and a thousand guillotines were instantly raised throughout the towns and villages of France. Amidst the roar of cannon, the rolling of drums, and the sound of the tocsin, the suspected were every where arrested, while the young and active were marched off to the defence of the country; fifteen hundred bastiles, spread through the department, soon groaned with the multitude of captives; and these being insufficient to contain their numbers, the monasteries, the palaces, the châteaux, were generally employed as temporary places of confinement. The abodes of festivity, the palaces of kings, the temples of religion, were filled with victims; † fast as the guillotine did its work, it could not reap the harvest of death which every where

separaient; elles doivent être aussi des tribunaux politiques: elles doivent se rappeler que tous les hommes qui n'ont pas été pour la Révolution, ont été pour cela même contre elle, puisqu'ils n'ont rien fait pour la patrie. Dans une place de ce genre, la sensibilité individuelle doit cesser, elle doit prendre un caractère plus grand, plus auguste, elle doit s'étendre à la République. Tout homme qui échappe à la justice nationale est un scélérat qui fera un jour périr des républicains que vous devez sauver. Tu as une grande mission à remplir: ouïe que la nature te fit homme et sensible, dans les commissions populaires l'humanité individuelle, l'humanité qui prend le voile de justice, est un crime."—PARRY, *juré révol. de Paris. Papiers trouvés chez Robespierre*, II. 370.

1 Pr. Hist.
Lanc. II. 149.
Mig. II. 320.
Chateaub.
Essai Hist.
D'ouv. I. 61.

Their prodigious energy.

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14.

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as the supply of the armies. Proscriptions, like victories, were essential to the furtherance of his principles.* He early attached himself to Robespierre, from the similarity of their ideas, and the reputation of incorruptibility which he enjoyed; their alliance gave rise to a portentous combination of visionary ideas and domineering passion, with inflexible and systematic severity.

Couthon was the creature of Robespierre. A mild and beautiful countenance, a figure half-paralysed, concealed a soul animated with the most unpitiable fanaticism. His voice was soft and melodious: it was like the low ringing of a silver bell. These three men formed a triumvirate, which soon acquired the management of the Committee, and awakened an animosity on the part of the other members which ultimately led to their ruin. What rendered their proceedings especially dangerous was the extraordinary ability and energy with which they were conducted, and the eloquent language and generous sentiments which they put forth on all occasions to justify their tyrannical actions. The Triumvirate, however, though very powerful, were far from being omnipotent in the Committee of Public Salvation, and with the Committee of General Safety they were often on terms verging on open hostility. In the former and more important committee, Barrère, Billaud Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, formed a second party, often at variance with Robespierre; Carnot, Prieur, and Lindet, often kept aloof from both. Robespierre's party in the Committee of Public Salvation was termed the "Men with a high hand:" Billaud Varennes was called "the Revolutionary party:" Carnot's the "Examiners." But though these divisions existed, and in the end produced important effects, they did not appear in any public act. To appearance the Committee were perfectly united; they wielded apparently by one will the whole powers of government. If the Convention was to be intimidated, St Just was employed; if surprised, Couthon was intrusted: if any opposition

"On nait trop de lois; trop peu d'exemples; les crimes nationaux; les crimes hypocrites sont impunis. *Faites punir un abus léger dans chaque partie: c'est le moyen d'effrayer les méchants, et de leur faire voir que le gouvernement a l'œil partout.* Appelez, mon ami, l'attention de la société sur des maux que le public ne voit pas; qu'elle s'occupe des grands moyens de gouverner un état libre."—St Just à Robespierre; *Papiers trouvés chez Robespierre*, II. 260.

13.
Of Couthon, and parties in the committee of Government.

1 Hist. Parl. xxxiii. 8. 9.
Mig. II. 319.
380.

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correspondence with them ; and that a committee should be appointed, to consider whether it should be maintained with those which were formed before that event. This measure, directed in an especial manner against the club of the Cordeliers, the centre of the influence of Danton, soon produced the desired effect. Intimidated by the destruction of the leaders of that great society, the whole other clubs in France, to avoid the coming storm, dissolved themselves ; and in less than ten days after the promulgation of this resolution, there remained no secondary club in France, but those which were affiliated with the Jacobins at Paris, which thenceforward became the sole organ of government in regulating public opinion. It was next proposed to close the sittings of the Cordeliers ; but this was unnecessary ; that club, once so terrible, rapidly declined, and soon died a natural death. The Jacobins, swayed with absolute power by the Committee of Public Salvation, with its affiliated societies, alone remained of all the innumerable clubs which had sprung up in France. Thus, on all sides, the anarchy of Revolution was destroying itself ; and out of its ruins the stern and relentless despotism of a few political fanatics, was wringing out of the heart's blood of France the last remnants of democratic fervour.

1. Decem.
April 24, 27.
1793. Hist.
Part. xxxvi.
326, 328.
12.
Character of
St Just.

Robespierre was the leader of this sect of fanatics ; but he was associated in the Committee with zealots more unpitiable or less distinguished than himself. These were St Just and Couthon. The former exhibited the true features of gloomy fanaticism ; a regular visage, dark and lank hair, a penetrating and severe look, a melancholy expression of countenance, revived the image of those desperate Scottish enthusiasts of whom modern genius has drawn so graphic a picture. Simple and unostentatious in his habits, austere in private, and indefatigable in public, he was, at twenty-five, the most resolute, because the most sincere of the Decemvirs. A warm admirer of the Republic, he was ever at his post in the committees, and never wanting in resolution during his missions to the armies ; enthusiastic in his passion for the multitude, he disdained to imitate its vices or pander to its desires as Herbert did. Steeled against every sentiment of pity, he demanded the execution of victims in the same manner

right to be so, but you have acted judiciously. It was necessary to resist crime by indelible justice, to destroy conspiracies, and to punish the sanguinary hypocrisy of those who, without courage, seek to restore the throne and destroy the Republic. The foundation of all great states has been laid in storms. The basis of all great institutions is terror. Where would now have been an indignant Republic? We have opposed the sword to the sword, and its power is in consequence established. It has emerged from the storm, and its origin is like that of the earth out of the confusion of Chaos, and of man who weeps in the hour of nativity." As a consequence of these principles, he proposed a general measure of proscription against all the nobles as the irreconcilable opponents of the Revolution—"You will never," said he, "satisfy the enemies of the people, till you have re-established tyranny in all its horrors. They can never be at peace with you; you do not speak the same language; you will never understand each other. Banish them by an inexorable law; the universe may receive them; and the public safety is our justification." He then proposed a decree which banished all the ex-nobles, all strangers from Paris, the forbidden towns, and seaports of France; and declared *hors la loi* whoever did not yield obedience in ten hours to the order. It was received with applause by the Convention, and passed, like all the decrees of government at that time, in silence, and without coming to a vote. The Committee of Public Salvation, now confident in its own strength, and strong in the universal submission of France, adopted several measures calculated to strengthen its power, and dissolve that of the people. The situations of the different ministers of state were abolished, and twelve committees appointed to carry on the details of government. These commissions, entirely appointed by the Committee of Public Salvation, and dependent on the will of its members, were, in fact, nothing but the offices in which they exercised their mighty and despotic powers. Shortly after, steps were taken to extinguish all the popular societies which did not immediately depend on the great parent club of the Jacobins. It was resolved at that society that they would no longer receive any deputation from bodies formed since the 10th August, & keep up any

11.
Destruction
of all clubs
in France
except the
Jacobins.
April 24.

April 13.
I Hist. Part.
xxii. 311,
312, 324.
Th. vi. 228,
230. Hist.
de la Conv.
iv. 36, 38.

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8.

Political

the period.

The political fanaticism of that extraordinary period exceeded the religious fervour of the age of Cromwell. Posterity will find it as difficult to credit the one as the other. "Plus le corps social transpire," said Collet d'Herbois, "plus il devient sain."—"Il n'y a que les morts qui ne reviennent pas," said Barère. "Le vaisseau de la Révolution ne peut arriver au port que sur une mer rouge de bords de sang," said St Just. "Une nation ne se régénère que sur des monceaux des cadavres," rejoined Robespierre.* Such were the principles daily carried into practice for months together in every town in France. Alone and unrestricted, the Committee of Public Salvation struck repeated and resistless blows from one end of the kingdom to the other. Fertile in crime, abounding in wretchedness, that eventful reign was not wanting in the most heroic examples of virtue. "Non tamen adeo virtutum steriles seculum, ut non et bona exempla prodiderit. Committas liberos profugos matres, secute matros in exilia conjuges, propinqui ardentis, constantes generi, contumaces etiam adversus tormentis servorum fides, supremis clarorum virorum necessitates, ipsa necessitas fortiter tolerata, et laudatis antiquorum mortibus pares exitus."†

The professed object of the Decemvirs was to establish a republic in France after the model of the ancients, to change the manners, the habits, the public spirit of the country. Sovereignty in the people, magistrates without

rendait compte régulièrement de ce qu'il passait. Plus tard il reçut beaucoup d'argent: le Vendredi avant le 10 août, on lui donna 100,000 écus. Madame Elizabeth disait avant cette journée: "Nous sommes tranquilles; nous pouvons compter sur l'union."—"Note trouvée dans les papiers de Gêneral La Fayette; *lib. Part. xxii. 105. 106.*" "Si on veut sauver le vaisseau de la République, point de pitié du sang! Que tous les Capetiens ou autres désomnations Royales périssent. Ni César ni Pompée! voilà ma provision de fol."—"A canon au canon, *Journal national, 10 Ther. Ann. II. Les papiers trouvés chez Robespierre, II. 225.*"

† These expressions, to which hundreds of others might be added, prove how true to nature the great Scottish novelist was in his delineation of the Covenanters. "We must smite them hip and thigh, even from the thing to the going down of the sun. It is our commission to slay them like women, infants nor suckling; therefore hinder me not," said Burley, "for this must not be done negligently."—"Old Mortality," chap. ix.

‡ Yet the age was not so sterile in virtue as to be destitute of great examples. Mothers attended their dying children, wives followed their exiled husbands, relations were undaunted, sons-in-law unflinching, the fidelity of slaves firm even against the utmost torture, the illustration subjected to the utmost hardship; hardship itself bravely endured, and death equal to the most renowned of antiquity, of daily occurrence.

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Deux
178. 192.
Mig. II. 316.
Tp. VI. 223.

put to death in the name of the public welfare; but terror of their rivals was the real spring of their actions. The most degrading despotism, were represented as emanating from the principles of freedom, and as impiously called for by state necessity. The noblest and most sacred motives which can influence the human breast—virtue, humanity, love for the public good, the freedom of the world—were incessantly invoked to justify their excursions, to vindicate their tyranny, to prolong a power founded on the agony of the people.¹

The death of Danton was followed by immediate and unqualified submission from every part of France. Legendre himself, his old friend, said at the Jacobin Club—"I am bound to declare before the people, that I am fully convinced, by the documents I have inspected, of Danton's guilt. Before his accusation I was his intimate friend; I would have answered for his patriotism with my head; but his conduct, and that of his accomplices, at their trial, leaves no doubt of their intentions." Robespierre made a laboured harangue, interrupted at every moment by applause, against his unfortunate rival. "It is evident," said Arthur, one of his own party, "that Danton was led to engage Dumourier to march to Paris. The money which Danton possessed was offered to Santerre, but not quickly enough to produce an insurrection." The same sentiments were re-echoed from every part of France. From all the departments arrived a crowd of addresses, congratulating the Committee of Public Salvation and the Convention on their energy. Every one hastened to make his submission to the government, and to admit the justice of its proceedings. But while approbation was in every mouth, submission in every countenance, terror in every heart, hatred at the oppressors was secretly spread-

1. Universal
and submission
followed the
death of
Danton.

2 Journal de
la Mont. No.
145, 1173.
Tp. VI. 223.

ing, and the downfall of democratic tyranny preparing amidst the acclamations of its triumph.²

"It clearly appears that Danton had at one period received large sums of money from the court. In addition to the evidence on this subject furnished by Bertrand de Molléville, already referred to, (ante, c. vii. § 24.) it appears from a note of La Fayette that he had previously agreed to sell himself to the court. "Danton était vendu à condition qu'on lui achetât pour 100,000 livres, (L. 4000), sa charge d'avocat au conseil, dont le remboursement d'après la suppression n'était que de 10,000 livres. Quand à Danton il était prêt à se vendre à tous les parties. Lorsqu'il faisait des motions inco-

divers aux Jacobins, il était leur espion au près de la Cour, à laquelle il

ages which witnessed the expiry of Roman virtue; they alone saved the honour of human nature, almost obliterated by the vices and the corruption of the empire. The Encyclopedists contained some estimable characters, but a much greater number of ambitious rascals. Many of them became leading men in the state. Whoever does not study their influence and policy would form a most imperfect notion of our Revolution. It was they who introduced the frightful doctrine of atheism; they were ever in politics below the dignity of freedom; in morality they went as far beyond the destruction of religious prejudices. Their disciples declaimed against despotism, and received the pensions of despots; they composed alternately tirades against kings, and madrigals for their mistresses; they were fierce with their pens, and rampant in antechambers. That sect propagated with infinite care the principles of Materialism, which spread so rapidly among the great and the beaux-esprits. We owe to them that selfish philosophy which reduced egotism to a system; regarded human society as a game of chance, where success was the sole distinction between what was just and unjust; probity as an affair of taste or good breeding; the world as the patrimony of the most dexterous of scoundrels.

"Among the great men of that period was one distinguished by the elevation of his soul and the greatness of his character, who showed himself a worthy preceptor of the human race.* He attacked tyranny with boldness; he spoke with enthusiasm of the Deity. His masculine and upright eloquence drew in colours of fire the charms of virtue; it defended the elevated doctrines which reason affords to console the human heart. The purity of his principles; his profound hatred of vice, his supreme contempt for the intriguing sophists who usurped the name of philosophers, drew upon him the hatred and persecution of his rivals and his friends. Could he have witnessed our Revolution, of which he was the precursor, and which bore him to the Pantheon, can we doubt he would have embraced with transport the doctrine of justice and equality? But what have the others done? They have frittered away their opinions, sold themselves to the gold

* Rousseau, whose remains had shortly before been translated to the Pantheon.

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of D'Orleans, or withdrawn into a base neutrality. The men of letters in general have dishonoured themselves in this revolution ; and, to the eternal disgrace of talent, the reason of the people alone accomplished its triumphs.

“What strange coalitions have we seen in persons embracing the most opposite opinions in favour of the doctrines which I combat ! Have we not heard, in a popular society, the traitor Guadet denounce a citizen for having pronounced the name of Providence ? Have we not, some time after, heard Hébert accusing another of having written against atheism ? Was it not Vergniaud and Gensonné who, in your very presence, descanted with fervour from your tribune on the propriety of banishing from the preamble of the constitution the name of the Supreme Being, which you had placed there ? Danton, who smiled with scorn at the words glory, virtue, posterity—Danton, whose system it was to vilify whatever can dignify the mind—Danton, who was cold and mute in the midst of the greatest dangers of liberty, was warm and eloquent in support of the same atheistical principles. Whence so singular a union on this subject among men so divided on others ? Did they wish to compensate their indulgence for aristocracy and tyranny by their war against the Deity ? No ! it was because they all alike, though from different motives, strove to dry up the fountains of whatever is grand and generous in the human heart. They embraced with transport, to justify their selfish designs, a system which, confounding the destiny of the good and the bad, leaves no other difference between them but the casual distinctions of fortune—no other arbiter but the right of the strongest or the most deceitful.

“Fanatics, hope nothing from us. To recall the worship of the Supreme Being is to level a mortal stroke at fanaticism. Fiction in the end disappears before truth : folly before reason—unrestrained, unpersecuted, all sects should be lost in the universal religion of nature. Ambitious priests, do not expect us to restore your reign. Such an enterprise would be beyond our power.—(Loud applause.) Priests are to morality what charlatans are to medicine. How different is the God of nature from the God of the church !—(Loud applause.) The priests have figured to themselves a god in their own image ; they have made him jealous, capricious, cruel, covetous, implacable ; they have

enthroned him in the heavens as a palace, and called him to the earth only to demand, for their behoof, tithes, riches, pleasures, honours, and power. The true temple of the Supreme Being is the universe; his worship virtue; his fêtes the joy of a great people, assembled under his eyes to tighten the bonds of social affection, and present to him the homage of pure and grateful hearts." In the midst of the acclamations produced by these eloquent words, the Convention decreed unanimously that they recognised the existence of the Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul, and that the worship most worthy of Him was the practice of the social virtues.¹

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May 7.

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxvii. 368,
369.

This speech is not only remarkable as containing the religious views of so memorable an actor in the bloodiest periods of the Revolution, but as involving a moral lesson of perhaps greater moment than any that has occurred in the history of mankind. For the first time in the annals of mankind, a great nation had thrown off all religious principles, and openly defied the power of Heaven itself; and from amidst the wreck which was occasioned by the unchaining of human passions, arose a solemn recognition of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul! It seemed as if Providence had permitted human wickedness to run its utmost length, in order, amidst the frightful scene, to demonstrate the necessity of religious belief, and vindicate the majesty of its moral government. In vain an infidel generation sought to establish the frigid doctrine of Materialism, and extinguish all belief of an existence or retribution hereafter. Thus their principles received their full development:—the anarchy they are fitted to induce was experienced; and that recognition was wrung from a suffering which had been denied by a prosperous age. Nor is this speech less striking as evincing the fanaticism of that extraordinary period, and the manner in which, during revolutionary convulsions, the most atrocious actions are made to flow from the purest and most benevolent expressions. If you consider the actions of Robespierre, he appears the most sanguinary tyrant that ever desolated the earth; if you reflect on his words, they seem dictated only by the noblest and most elevated feelings. There is nothing impossible in such a combination; the history of the world exhibits too many examples of its occurrence. It is the

24.
Reflections
on this
speech.

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nature of fanaticism, whether religious or political, to produce it. The inquisition of Spain, the crusade against the Albigeois, the fires of Smithfield, the *autos-da-fé* of Castile, arose from the same principles as the daily executions of the French tyrant. It is because revolutions lead to such terrible results, by so flowery and seductive a path, that they are chiefly dangerous; and because the ruin thus induced is irrevocable, that the seducers of nations are doomed by inexorable justice to the same infamy as the betrayers of individuals.

25.
Unsuccessful
attempt to assassi-
nate Robes-
pierre and
Collot
d'Herbois.
May 24.

Two unsuccessful attempts at assassination increased, as is always the case, the power of the tyrant. The first of these was made by an obscure, but intrepid man, of the name of L'Admiral, who tried to assassinate Collot d'Herbois; the second by a young woman, named Cecile Renaud. L'Admiral, when brought before his judges, openly avowed that he had intended to assassinate Robespierre before Collot d'Herbois.* When called on to divulge who prompted him to the commission of such a crime, he replied firmly—"That it was not a crime; that he wished only to render a service to his country; that he had conceived the project without any external suggestion; and that his only regret was that he had not succeeded." Cecile called at his house, and intreated in the most earnest manner to see Robespierre; the urgency of her manner excited the suspicion of his attendants, and she was arrested. Two knives, found in her bundle, afforded a presumption as to the purpose of her visit; but there was no other evidence against her, and she positively denied on her examination having intended to injure any one. Being asked what was her motive for wishing to see him, she replied—"I wished to see how a tyrant was made. I admit I am a Royalist, because I prefer one king to fifty thousand." She behaved on the scaffold, when executed by the sentence of the Revolutionary Tribunal some weeks after, with the firm-

* The following letter, found among Robespierre's papers, shows with what feelings he was regarded at the time by his partisans:—"J'ai été saisi d'horreur en apprenant les dangers que tu as courus; rassure-toi, brave républicain. L'Être Suprême, dont tu viens de prouver l'existence, veille sur tes jours; ils seront conservés malgré tes ennemis nombreux, et la République sera sauvée. On t'a tendu un piège en t'offrant pour demeurer le palais national: garde-toi de l'accepter: on ne peut être ami du peuple et habiter un palais."—*Citoyen D. à ROBESPIERRE, 12 Prairial, An. ii Papier, inédite trouvée chez ROBESPIERRE, ii. 132.*

ness of Charlotte Corday; a great number of other persons, sixty in all, were involved in her fate, among whom were a number of young men, brought from the frontier, where they had been bravely combating in defence of their country. Her father, aunt, and brother, were doomed along with her, though she solemnly protested their innocence, and there was not a vestige of evidence against them. Among the rest was a youth named, Hypolite Montmorency Laval, of distinguished talents and fine figure, whose only offence was the name he bore and the genius he had inherited; and a beautiful young woman, Mademoiselle Saint Amaranthe, a friend of Robespierre, who was executed with her mother for an expression accidentally dropped when in company with himself, at dinner at his own house, on the number of deputies who were about to be brought to punishment. The whole sixty were conducted together in red shirts to the place of execution, as if they had all been assassins; though not one stroke had been given, and hardly one knew another even by sight. The trial of the whole before the Revolutionary Tribunal just took two hours.* Fouquier Tinville was indignant at their firmness. "I must get," said he, "with the cortege to the scaffold, should it cost me my dinner, to see if they will hold out to the last."¹†

The Committee of Public Salvation took advantage of the sensation produced by this unsuccessful attempt, to bring forward a proposal for the refusing of quarter to the English and Hanoverian troops. On 29th May, Barère read in the Convention the report of that ruling committee, which recounted all the hostilities of England, and accused that power as being the instigator of these conspiracies. "Too long," said he, "we have slept on conspiracies; the plots of Danton and Hébert have not awakened us. Yet a few days of impunity to the English and Austrians, and the country will become only a heap of ruins and ashes, covered with the crimes and vengeance of despotism. Let us, then, declare war to the death with the English and Hanoverians. Soldiers of liberty! when the

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¹ Moniteur, 29th May.
Deux Amis, xii. 302, 303.
Mig. ii. 322
Lac. ii. 162, 163 Th. vi. 321, 323.
326. Bull. du Trib. Rév. No. 64.

26.
Decree against giving quarter to the English or Hanoverians.

* "Voyez," dit Fouquier, "comme elles sont effrontées: il faut que j'aie les voir monter sur l'échafaud pour m'assurer si elles conserveront ce caractère, dussé-je me passer de dîner."—PRUDHOMME, v. 271.

† Mademoiselle Saint Amaranthe looked so beautiful with the scarlet robe reflected on her cheeks, that in a fortnight all the Parisian ladies had red shawls "à la Saint Amaranthe."—*Deux Amis*, xii. 302.

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chances of war shall throw an English or Hanoverian into your hands, think of the ashes of Toulon and La Vendée. Strike! None should return to the liberticide shores of Britain, nor enter the free realms of France. Let the English slaves perish, and Europe will be free." On this report the Convention decreed *unanimously*,—"No prisoner shall be taken from the English or Hanoverians."* Robespierre spoke with singular satisfaction of this bloody resolution: "It will," said he, "be a noble subject of contemplation to posterity—it is already a spectacle worthy of the attention of earth and heaven, to see the Representative Assembly of the French people placed on the inexhaustible volcano of conspiracies—with the one hand bear to the Eternal Author of all things the homage of a great people, and with the other launch the thunderbolt against the tyrants, and recall to the world the flying footsteps of liberty, justice, and virtue. They shall perish, the tyrants leagued against the French people: they shall perish, all the factions which are leagued with them for the destruction of our liberties. You will not make peace, but you will give it to the world, you will take it from crime."¹ (Loud applause.)

1 *Moniteur*,
29th May.

27.
Fête in
honour of
the Supreme
Being and
speech of
Robespierre.
June 7.

Meanwhile, a magnificent fête was prepared by the Convention in honour of the Supreme Being. Two days before it took place, Robespierre was appointed President, and entrusted with the duty of Supreme Pontiff on the occasion. He marched fifteen feet in advance of his colleagues, in a brilliant costume, bearing flowers and fruits in his hands. His address to the people, which followed, was both powerful and eloquent. "God," said he, "*has not created kings to devour the human race*; he has not created priests to harness them like vile animals to the chariots of kings, and to exhibit to the world examples of perfidy, avarice, and baseness; but he has created the universe to attest his power, and man to aid him in the glorious undertaking—to love his fellows, and arrive at happiness by the path of virtue. It is he who placed in the bosom of the triumphant oppressor remorse and terror, and in the heart of the oppressed innocent calmness and resolution; it is he who compels the just man to hate the wicked, and the wicked to respect the just; it is he who

* "Il ne sera aucun prisonnier Anglais ou Hanoverien"—*Decree*, 7 *Prairial*, 1794. (26th May.)—*Moniteur*, 29th May 1794.

makes the mother's womb leap with tenderness and joy, and bathes with delicious tears the eyes of a son pressed against his mother's bosom ; it is he who causes the most imperious passions to yield to the love of country ; it is he who has covered nature with charms, with riches, and majesty. All that is good flows from him, or rather is a part of himself. Evil springs from depraved man who oppresses, or permits the oppression of his fellow-creatures. The Author of Nature, in engraving, with his immortal hand, on the heart of man the code of justice and equality, has traced the sentence of death against tyrants. He has bound together all mortals by the chain of love—perish the tyrants who would venture to break it !”¹

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¹ Hist. Parl.
xxxiii. 179.

These eloquent words excited, as well they might, the warmest hopes in all present that Robespierre was about to put his principles in practice, and at length bring the reign of blood to a close. But they were speedily dashed to the earth by the words which closed his address—“ People ! to-day let us give ourselves up to the transports of pure happiness ; to-morrow we will with increased energy combat vice and the tyrants !” The ceremony on this occasion, which was arranged under the direction of the painter David, was very magnificent. An amphitheatre was placed in the gardens of the Tuileries, opposite to which were statues representing Atheism, Discord, and Selfishness, which were destined to be burned by the hand of Robespierre. Beautiful music opened the ceremony, and the president, after an eloquent speech, seized a torch, and set fire to the figures, which were soon consumed ; and when the smoke cleared away, an effigy of Wisdom was seen in their place, but it was remarked that it was blackened by the conflagration of those that had been consumed. Thence they proceeded to the Champ de Mars, where patriotic songs were sung, oaths taken by the young, and homage offered to the Supreme Being.²

28.
Hopes it
awakened
are all de-
stroyed by
his conclud-
ing words.

² Deux
Amis, xii.
309, 310.
Th. vi. 310,
342. Mig.
ii. 322.
Hist. Parl.
xxxiii. 179.

These measures and declarations on the part of Robespierre, produced a great impression in Europe. Foreign nations, who had been horrified by the awful catastrophes of the Reign of Terror, had seen with undisguised satisfaction the execution of Danton and his party, who had commenced the Revolution, and brought the King to the scaffold ; and of Hébert and the Anarchists, who had car-

29.
Great im-
pression
produced
by these
steps in
Europe.

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¹ Hard, ii.
452. Hist.
Parl. 589,
391.

ried its atrocities and impiety to their most dreadful length. When, therefore, they beheld the government which had effected their destruction, expressing such humane sentiments, in such beautiful language, the hope became general that a reaction had at length set in: that Robespierre had acquired the mastery of the Revolution, and that out of the excesses of anarchy had arisen the power which could coerce it. Foreign powers, accordingly, began to entertain sanguine hopes that the Revolution had reached its limit, and that a government had at last arisen with which it might be practicable to negotiate, and possibly conclude a durable peace.¹

30.
Great power
now enjoyed
by Robes-
pierre.

The effect of these steps was not less remarkable in France itself. At the fête of the Supreme Being, on 7th June, the power of Robespierre appeared to have reached such a point, that, far beyond that of any king, it more nearly resembled that of a god upon earth. "Never," says an eyewitness, "had the sun shone with a brighter radiance: never was a more joyous and enthusiastic concourse of spectators assembled. Robespierre himself was astonished at the immense crowd of people who filled the gardens of the Tuileries. Hope and gaiety beamed from every countenance; the smiling looks and elegant costume of the women diffused a universal enchantment. As he marched along, overshadowed by his plumes, adorned with his tricolor scarf, the air resounded with cries of 'Vive Robespierre!' and his countenance was radiant with joyfulness. Alexander, when declared the son of Jupiter by the oracle of Ammon, was not more proud. 'See how they applaud him!' said his colleagues. 'He would become a god! he is no longer the high priest of the Supreme Being.'" The Committee of Public Salvation being now avowedly in possession of supreme power, their adulators in the Convention and Jacobin Club offered them the ensigns of sovereignty. But they had the good sense to perceive that the people were not yet prepared for this change, and that the sight of guards or a throne might shake a power against which two hundred thousand captives in chains could not oppose resistance.² "The members of the Committee," said Couthon, "have no desire to be assimilated to despots; they have no need of guards for their defence; their own virtue, the love of the

² Vilate,
Causes, &c.
de la Rév.
du 9th
Therm. 196.
Sénart, 184.
189. Hist.
Parl. xxxiii.
176, 178
Th. vi. 329.

people, Providence, watch over their days ; they have no occasion for any other protection. When necessary, they will know how to die at their post in defence of freedom." *

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1794.

But the retreat from crime is not to nations, any more than individuals, on a path strewed with flowers ; and many and woful were the calamities through which France had to pass, before it regained the peace and security of a settled government. This was speedily demonstrated. The bloody intentions announced by Robespierre were too effectually carried into execution on the second day following the fête of the Supreme Being, by the decree of the 22d Prairial, for increasing the powers of the Revolutionary Tribunal, passed on the motion of Couthon. By this sanguinary law, every form, privilege, or usage, calculated to protect the accused, were swept away. " Every postponement of justice," says Couthon, " is a crime ; every formality indulgent to the accused is a crime : the delay in punishing the enemies of the country, should not be greater than the time requisite for identifying them." The right of prosecution was extended to the Convention, the Committee of Public Salvation, the Committee of General Safety, the commissioners of the Convention, and the public accuser ; no distinction was to be made between members of the Convention and ordinary individuals. The right of insisting for an individual investigation, and of being defended by counsel, had been withdrawn by a previous decree on June 2. In addition to those struck at by former laws, there were included in this new decree, " all those who have seconded the projects of the enemies of France, either by favouring the retreat of, or shielding from punishment, the aristocracy or conspirators ; or by persecuting and calumniating the patriots ; or by corrupting the mandatories of the people ; or by abusing the principles of the Revolution, of the laws, or of the government, by false or perfidious applications ; or by deceiving the representatives of the people ; or by spreading discouragement or false intelligence ; or by misleading the public by false instructions or depraved

31.
Additional
powers conferred on the
Revolutionary Tribunal.
June 9.

* " Je tiens d'une personne pour l'avoir entendue aux Tuileries le jour de la fête ce mot énergique d'un vrai Sans-culotte.— Voyez ce he—te-là ! ce n'est pas assez d'être le maître : il faut encore qu'il soit un dieu."—VILATE, *Mystères de la Mère de Dieu Devoilés*, 32.

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XV.

1794.

¹ Decree,
22d Prairial
(9th June.)
Hist. Parl.
xxxiii 193.
184. Moni-
teur, 10th
June. Lac.
ii. 160, 161.

32.

Debate on it
in the Con-
vention, and
remarkable
speech on it
by Robes-
pierre.

example." The proof¹ requisite to convict of these multi-
farious offences was declared to be—"Every piece of evi-
dence, material, moral, verbal, or written, which is suffi-
cient to convince a reasonable understanding." The
Revolutionary Tribunal was divided into four separate
courts, each possessing the same powers as the original,
a public accuser, and a sufficient number of judges and
jurymen awarded to each, to enable them to proceed with
rapidity in the work of extermination.¹

Accustomed as the Convention was to blind obedience,
they were startled by this project. "I demand an
adjournment: If this law passes, nothing remains," said
Ruamps, "but to blow out our brains." Alarmed at the
agitation which prevailed, Robespierre mounted the
Tribune. "For long," said he, "the Assembly has argued
and decided on the same day, because for long it has been
liberated from the empire of faction. Two opinions,
strongly pronounced, divide the Republic. The one is to
punish severely and inexorably all attempts against liber-
ty; the other is the cowardly and criminal opinion of the
aristocracy, who have never ceased since the commence-
ment of the Revolution to demand, directly or indirectly,
an amnesty for the conspirators and enemies of the coun-
try. For two months the Convention has sat under the
sword of assassins; and the very moment when liberty
appears to have gained its greatest triumph, is precisely
the one when the conspirators against the country act
with most audacity. Citizens, be assured the conspirators
wish to divide us—they wish to intimidate us! Have we
not defended a part of the Assembly* against the poniards
which wickedness and a false zeal would have drawn
against them? We expose ourselves to individual assas-
sins to destroy those who would ruin the Republic. We
know how to die, provided the Convention and the coun-
try are saved. I demand that the project be discussed,
article by article, and without an adjournment. I have
observed that for long the Convention has discussed and
decreed at once, because a great majority were really
intent on the public good.² I demand that, instead of
pausing on the proposal for adjournment, we sit till eight
at night if necessary, to discuss the project of the law

² Hist. Parl.
xxxiii. 198.
202. Moni-
teur, June
12. Lac.
ii. 160, 161.

* The seventy-three arrested Girondists.

which has now been submitted to it." The Convention felt their master, and in *thirty minutes* the law was passed.

On the following day some members, chiefly adherents of the old party of Danton, endeavoured to overthrow this sanguinary decree of the Assembly. Bourdon de l'Oise proposed that the safety of the members of the Convention should be provided for by a special enactment, to the effect that they should not be indicted but in pursuance of a decree of themselves. He was ably supported by Merlin; and the Legislature seemed inclined to adopt the proposal. Couthon attacked the Mountain, from which the opposition seemed chiefly to emanate. Bourdon replied—"Let the members of the Committee know," said he, "that if they are patriots; so are we. I esteem Couthon, I esteem the Committee; but, more than all, I esteem the unconquerable Mountain, which has saved the public freedom."—"The Convention, the Committee, the Mountain," said Robespierre, "are the same thing. Every representative who loves liberty, every representative who is resolved to die for his country, is part of the Mountain. Woe to those who would assassinate the people, by permitting some miserable intriguers to divide the patriots, in order to elevate themselves on the public ruin!" The imperious tone of Robespierre, the menaces of his colleagues, again overawed the Assembly, and the law passed without the protecting clause proposed by Bourdon. Every individual in the Convention was now at the mercy of the Dictators; and the daily spectacle of fifty persons executed, was enough to subdue more undaunted spirits.¹

It is not surprising that the Convention, in this manner, made an unwonted effort to avert the passing of this terrible law; for the consciences of many told them, what is now known to have been the case, that its almost unlimited powers were mainly directed against themselves. From the invaluable papers found in Robespierre's possession after his death, by Courtois, and first published in 1828,* it is now known that the secret views of Robespierre, in proposing this sanguinary law, were to

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33.

Ineffectual
efforts to
modify the
law.

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxxiii. 203.
217. Mig. ii.
325. Luc. ii.
170. Th. vi.
350—353
Hist. de la
Conv. iii.
367.

34.

Robespierre's
secret motives in passing this law.

* "Papiers inédits trouvés chez Robespierre, St Just, Payan, &c. Paris, 1828. 3 vols." They had been in great part, in the first instance, suppressed by Courtois; and a complete set was first published by the French government on his death, in 1828.

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destroy a large portion of the Convention. He was in despair at the universal profligacy, selfishness, and corruption with which he was surrounded in all the branches of administration, civil and military. Universal suffrage and self-government, instead of having produced a better set of public functionaries than those who had owed their appointment to the nobility, had brought up one *so infinitely worse*, that Robespierre, the incarnation of the democratic principle, felt that the first step in social regeneration must be to destroy them all. He was overwhelmed with horror at the situation of the commonwealth, and the total failure of the vast streams of blood he had caused to flow to produce any, even the slightest, practical amelioration in the administration of affairs. He constantly said—"All is lost; we have no longer any resource; I see no one to save the country."* The project of this law, as it struck at nearly all the members both of the government and the Convention, was accordingly warmly combated in both the Committees and the Assembly. It was brought forward in the latter with the knowledge only of Couthon, and, as soon as the discussion was over, it was vehemently assailed in the Committee of Public

* "Son âme était profondément ulcérée; quoique dans les procès d'Herbert, de Danton, et de Chaumette, une foule des personnages bien dignes de l'échafaud eussent été justement frappés, il déplorait néanmoins que de viles passions, que la haine et la vengeance, et non pas l'amour de la patrie et de l'équité, eussent discerné et marqué les têtes qu'il fallait abattre. Il voyait que les exécutions n'avaient en rien diminué les dangers. Autour de lui, aux premiers postes de la République, il voyait des hommes sans probité, sans mœurs, souillés pour la plupart d'actes infâmes, et cependant environnés d'une popularité à travers laquelle il était presque impossible de les atteindre. Il voyait se grouper autour d'eux d'autres hommes qui n'avaient aidé la bonne cause que par toutes sortes de mauvais moyens, et qui deployaient maintenant pour défendre eux-mêmes toutes les ressources de l'intrigue, du mensonge, et de la calomnie, avec l'habileté qu'ils avaient acquis par une pratique de six années. Ainsi il était en proie au dégoût et aux desespoirs. Qu'importait que nos armées étaient victorieuses de l'étranger? A l'intérieur et dans le centre même de sa force et de sa puissance, la nation était possédée par des scélérats? N'était-il pas évident que l'anarchie, la contre-révolution, et la restauration de l'ancienne régime, étaient les conséquences prochaines et inévitables d'un tel état de choses? Pendant les derniers jours qu'il fréquenta les comités, Robespierre disait habituellement: 'Tout est perdu; il n'y a plus de ressources; Je ne vois plus personne pour sauver la patrie.' Il proposa la loi du 22 Fructidor dans l'unique but de créer un pouvoir à brider, dont il préméditait de se servir en temps opportun pour épurier la Convention. St Just était absent, il communiqua son projet à Couthon seulement, et celui-ci se chargea du rapport. Billaud, Collot, Barère, et Vadier, n'ont eu connaissance que par le rapport de Couthon, et ils ont repoussé cette loi dans le sein du comité, avec plus d'énergie que l'Assemblée elle-même n'avait mis à la critique."—*Histoire Parlementaire*, xxxiii. 182, 183.

Salvation.* The truth was, that Robespierre, St Just, and Couthon, now stood nearly alone there: they beheld the legislature and whole offices of government, from the highest to the lowest, filled by such an infamous set of scoundrels, whom universal suffrage had brought up to the head of affairs, that they could see no chance for the Republic but in extending extermination to nearly the whole persons in authority in the state.¹†

Armed by this accession of power, the proscriptions proceeded during the next six weeks with redoubled violence. The power of the Committee of Public Salvation was prodigious, and wielded with an energy to which there is nothing comparable in the history of modern

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¹ Hist. Parl.
xxviii. 182,
183.

35.
Renewed
violence of
the govern-
ment.
Means by
which the
support of
the people
was secured.

* "Le lendemain du 22 Prairial, Billaud Varennes accuse hautement Robespierre aussitôt qu'il entre au comité, et lui reproche d'avoir porté à la Convention seul avec Couthon le décret abominable que faisant l'effroides patriotes. 'Le jour,' ajoute Billaud, 'où un membre du comité se permet-
rait de présenter seul un décret à la Convention, il n'y a plus de liberté mais la volonté d'un seul.' 'Je vois bien,' dit Robespierre, 'que je suis seul, et que personne ne me soutient;' et aussitôt il déclama avec fureur. Ses cris étaient si forts, que sur les terrasses des Tuileries plusieurs citoyens s'étaient rassemblés. On ferma les fenêtres, et l'on continua la discussion avec la même chaleur. 'Je sais,' dit Robespierre, 'qu'il y a dans la Convention une faction qui veut me perdre, et tu défends ici Ruamps.' 'Il faut donc dire,' reprend Billaud, 'd'après ton décret, que tu veux guillotiner la Convention.' Robespierre répond avec agitation, 'Vous en êtes tous témoins que je ne dis pas que je veuille faire guillotiner la Convention Nationale; je te connais maintenant,' ajouta-t-il en s'adressant à Billaud. 'Et moi aussi, je te connais comme un Anti-révolutionnaire,' répond le dernier. Robespierre s'agita, se promenant dans le comité; il porte son hypocrisie jusqu'à répandre des larmes."—*Lecointre de Versailles. Réponse des deux Membres des Comités, Nov. 8th Hist. Parl.* xxxiii 184, 185.

† Among the very interesting papers found in Robespierre's house after his death, was the following note in his own handwriting, as to the character of some of the leading members of the Convention, whose coalition soon after produced his overthrow:—"Tous les chefs de la Révolution sont des scélérats déjà notés par des traits d'immoralité et d'infamie. Thuriot ne fut jamais qu'un partisan d'Orléans; son silence depuis la chute de l'anton, et depuis son expulsion des Jacobins, contrainte avec son bavardage éternel avant cette époque. Il se borne à intriguer sourdement et à s'agiter beaucoup à la Montagne, lorsque le Comité du Salut Public propose une mesure fatal aux factions. Bourdon de l'Oise s'est couvert de crimes dans la Vendée, où il s'est donné de plaisir, dans ses orgies avec le traître Tunk, de tuer des volontaires de sa main. Il joint la perfidie à la fureur. Il a été le plus fougueux défenseur de l'athéisme. Il n'a cessé de faire du décret qui proclame l'existence de l'Etre Suprême un moyen de susciter dans la Montagne des ennemis au gouvernement, et il a réussi. Le jour de la fête, en présence du peuple, il s'est permis sur ce sujet les plus grossières sarcasmes, et les déclamations les plus indecentes. Leonard Bourdon—intrigant méprisé de tous les temps. l'un des principaux complices, ami inseparable de Cloutz, il était initié dans la conspiration tramée chez Gobel. Rien n'égale la bassesse des intrigues qu'il mit en œuvre pour grossir le nombre de ses pensionnaires. Il était aux Jacobins l'un des orateurs les plus intarissables pour propager les doctrines d'Hébert."—*Notes écrites de la main de ROBESPIERRE; Papiers inédits de ROBESPIERRE,* ii. 37, and iii. 41.; and *Hist. Parl.* xxxiii. 164, 172.

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¹ Brissot's
Mémoires,
ii. 32.

² Deux
Anna, xii.
338, 340.
Mig. ii. 326,
327.

Europe. The ruling principle of that extraordinary government was to destroy the whole aristocracy both of rank and talent.¹ Power of intellect, independence of thought, was in an especial manner the object of the Dictator's jealousy; he regarded it with more aversion than the aristocracy either of birth or wealth.* It was on this foundation that his authority rested; the mass of the people ardently supported a government which was rapidly destroying every thing which was above them in station, or superior in ability. Every man felt his own consequence increased, and his own prospects improved, by the destruction of his more fortunate rivals. Inexorable towards individuals or leaders, Robespierre was careful of protecting the masses of the community; and the lower orders, who always have a secret pleasure in the depression of their superiors, beheld with satisfaction the thunder which rolled innocuous over their heads, striking every one who could by possibility stand in their way. The whole physical force of the Republic, which must always be drawn from the labouring classes, was thus devoted to his will. The armed force of Paris, under the orders of Henriot, and formed of the lowest of the rabble, was at his disposal; the Club of the Jacobins, purified and composed according to his orders, were ready to support all his projects; the Revolutionary Tribunal blindly obeyed his commands; the new municipality, with Henriot at its head, was devoted to his will. By the activity of the Jacobin clubs, and the universal prevalence of the same interests, a similar state of things prevailed in every department of France. Universally the lowest class considered Robespierre as identified with the Revolution, and as centring in his person all the projects of aggrandisement which were afloat in their minds.² None remained to

* "Quel est le but? L'exécution de la constitution en faveur du peuple. Quels seront nos ennemis? Les hommes viciés et les riches. Il faut donc éclairer le peuple: mais quels sont les obstacles à l'instruction du peuple? Les écrivains mercénaires, qui l'égarent par des impostures journalières et impudentes. Que conclure de là? Qu'il faut proscrire les écrivains comme les plus dangereux ennemis de la patrie. Quels sont les moyens de terminer la guerre civile? Proscription des écrivains perfides et contre-révolutionnaires; propagation de bons écrits. 2. Puniton des trahis et conspirateurs. 3. Nomination des généreux patriotes, distribution des autres. 4. Subsistance et lois populaires."—*Catéchisme écrit par la main de Robespierre. Papiers inédits trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE*, ii. 13.

contest his authority but the remnants of the Constitutional and Girondist parties, who still lingered in the Convention.

In pursuance of these principles, the government of Robespierre, amidst all its severity to those who were either elevated by birth, possessed of fortune, distinguished by talent, or allied by habit or inclination to any of these higher classes, had made several steps towards the establishment of institutions designed for the elevation and relief of the labouring poor, and which, if combined with a just and rational government in other respects, might have been attended with the most salutary effects. "Education," said Barère, in the name of the Committee of Public Salvation, "is the greatest blessing which man can receive: it is the only one which the vicissitudes of time cannot take away. The incalculable advantage of revolutions is, that merit obtains the rank which is due to it, and that each citizen fills the situation for which he is qualified by the species of talent which he possesses. The Republican, therefore, should be instructed in such a manner, as to be prepared for every situation either of peace or of war." In pursuance of these principles, it was decreed that six young men should be sent to Paris from every district in the Republic, to be educated at the public expense in the *Ecole de Mars*, and placed under the immediate direction of the Committee of Public Salvation, to be instructed in the art of war and fortification. This was immediately carried into effect, and became the foundation of the famous Polytechnic School, which furnished such an inexhaustible supply of skilled officers for the armies of the empire.¹

The frightful misery in the interior of the empire, the natural result of the Revolution, at the same time attracted the attention of government, and they prepared to meet it in a noble spirit. "While the cannon," said Carnot, in the name of the Committee of Public Salvation, "thunders on the frontier, mendicity, that scourge of monarchies, has made frightful progress in the interior. Yet it is an evil disgraceful to a republic, incompatible with a popular government. The shameful word *beggar* should be unknown in a republican dictionary, and the picture of mendicity on the earth has hitherto been nothing

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36.

Decree establishing the Polytechnic School.
June 1.

¹ Decree, June 1.
Hist. Parl. xxxii. 134.

37.

Admirable measures of Robespierre for the relief of pauperism.

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but that of constant conspiracies of the class of proprietors against that of non-proprietors. Let us leave to insolent despotism the construction of hospitals, to bury the unfortunates whom it has created, or to support for a moment the slaves whom it could not devour. That horrible generosity of the despot only aids him in deceiving the people. Despotism has favoured the mendicants only because they were base and suppliant. But what has it done for the general wide-spread indigence of the country? What for tottering age or helpless infancy? What for the bereaved widow or the weeping orphan? Nothing, because it was independent, and would rather perish than fall at their feet. The true principles of beneficence are to succour, *in their own homes, infancy and youth where it is destitute; manhood, where it is sick or without employment; old age, where it is impotent or infirm.*" In pursuance of these just and enlightened principles, a great variety of regulations were brought forward and decreed for the relief, *in their own homes*—not in hospitals or by money charity—of orphan and destitute children, and their education; for the succour of middle-aged men and women in a state of temporary destitution; and for the permanent support of widows, the aged, and the impotent, as well as those who had been mutilated in the public service, and their widows and children.—“*Fas est et ab hoste doceri.*” The true principles of the management of the poor are to be found in the report of the Committee of Public Salvation, and regular governments will never act so wisely for their own as well as their people’s interest, as when they take this leaf out of the book of their enemies.^{1*}

¹ See Decree, May 20. Hist. Parl. xxxiii. 24, 56.

Robespierre, shortly before his fall, thus summed up the principles of his administration. “I have spoken of the virtue of the people; but that virtue, demonstrated by the whole Revolution, would not alone suffice to defend us against the factions who never cease to corrupt and

* The provisions of this law, evidently drawn up by Robespierre, and agreed to by the Committee of Public Salvation and the Convention, are very remarkable, and may serve as a model for many governments, which in other respects with justice decry their proceedings. Its details are far too minute for a work of general history, but the principles on which they were founded were these:—1. That the succour of the destitute, the orphans, and the impotent, is a duty of the state, and should be discharged by the public functionaries, and from the state funds. 2. That the distribution of relief should be made by a public officer, to be appointed for that purpose in each of the departments of the Republic. 3. That in each

tear asunder the Republic. Why is that? Because there are two wholly different people in France. The mass of the citizens, pure, simple, loving justice, and friendly to liberty; that mass which has conquered its enemies within, and shaken the throne of tyrants. The other is a mass of rascals and intriguers, of aristocrats and charlatans, who would convert power and instruction to no other purpose but their own aggrandisement. As long as that impure race exists, the condition of the Republic will be unhappy and precarious. Let them reign for a day, and the country is lost. It is for you to deliver yourselves from them by imposing energy and unchangeable concert. In saying these words, I am perhaps sharpening poniards against myself, and it is for that very reason that I pronounce them. You will persevere in your principles and your triumphant march; you will stifle crime and save your country. I have lived enough. I have seen the French people start from the depth of servitude and debasement to the summit of glory and of republican virtue. I have seen their fetters broken, and the guilty thrones which oppressed the earth shaken by their triumphant arms: I have seen—more marvellous still—a prodigy which the corruptions of the monarchy, and the inexperience of the first periods of the Revolution, could hardly have permitted us to hope—an assembly invested with the power of the French nation, marching with a firm and rapid step towards the completion of the public happiness: devoted to the people, and to the

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38.

Remarkable
speech of
Robespierre
on the prin-
ciples of the
government.

department there shall be opened a register, to be entitled "Book of National Benecence," in which shall be a title, 1st, For infirm or aged cultivators: 2d, For infirm or aged artisans; 3d, For mothers and widows. For these classes it was calculated that there would be required in all the departments:—

	Francs.
For the first,	7,144,000 or L.285,760 a-year.
For the second,	2,040,000 ... 81,600 ...
For the third,	3,060,000 ... 122,400 ...
For the sick poor in their own houses,	160,000 ... 6,400 ...
	12,404,000 ... 496,160 ...

The sum allotted to each pauper receiving public aid was to be ten sous (4d.) a day for each adult, and six sous a-day (2½d.) for each child under ten years of age. The whole relief was to be given in the houses of the poor; and it was calculated that in the first instance the number of families in health receiving succour would be 108,000, or 425,000 individuals, and the sick 21,000. There can be no doubt these numbers were below what would have been required; but these enactments contain the principles of all right legislation on the subject.—See *Histoire l'Assemblée de la Révolution*, xxxiii. 37, 68.

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triumph of equality,¹ worthy of giving to the world the signal of liberty and the example of every virtue. Complete, then, citizens, your sublime work ! You have placed yourselves in the front rank, to sustain the first efforts of the enemies of humanity. We will deserve that honour, and we will trace with our blood the path to immortality. May you ever display that unalterable energy, which is required to enable you to resist the monsters of the universe combined against you, and enjoy in peace the fruits of your virtues and the blessings of the people !"¹

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxxiii. 132
133

39.
Prodigious
and increas-
ing issue of
assignats.

But in the midst of these warm anticipations and eloquent declamations, the finances of the Republic were daily falling into a more deplorable condition, and its prodigious expenditure, external and internal, was sustained only by a ceaseless and constantly increasing issue of assignats. By a report of Cambon, the minister of finance, on 16th May 1794, it appeared that the assignats which had been created up to that period amounted to the enormous sum of 8,778,000,000 francs (£351,120,000 sterling) of which number there still remained in circulation 5,898,000,000 francs, or £235,920,000. So immense a mass of paper, amounting at the very lowest estimate to three times the whole present circulation of either France or England, taking both specie and bank-notes into view, of course could not exist in circulation without producing a depreciation in its value to almost nothing ; the more especially as the whole transactions between man and man in the country were at a stand, in consequence of the blasting operation of the law of the maximum ; and foreign commerce, equally with domestic expenditure, was at an end. But as the assignats bore a forced circulation, and the refusal to take them at par would probably lead to a denunciation at the nearest revolutionary committee, there was no alternative but to shun the pestilence as much as possible, and avoid either selling any thing, or engaging in any transaction whatever in which money was employed. But creditors could not do this, and fraudulent debtors gladly bought up assignats, and forced a discharge of their debts for a fiftieth or hundredth part of their real value.²

² Rapport
de Cambon,
May 16.
Moniteur,
May 18, p.
973.

While the assignats were thus sweeping away the whole

capital of the state, the march of the Revolution was equally devastating and relentless in the destruction of human life. The proceedings of the Revolutionary Tribunal, after the law of 22d Prairial had passed, were so brief as hardly to deserve the name of a trial; while the columns of the *Moniteur* of the following day exhibited fatal proof, that to be arraigned before that tribunal, and sent to the guillotine, were in general the same thing.* Bands of thirty, forty, and fifty persons were successively brought up, often two sets in a day, composed of men and women, old, middle-aged, and young, generally wholly unconnected with each other, and who never knew of each other's existence till they heard each other's names in one accusation. Royalists, Dantonists, Anarchists, and Constitutionalists, were all huddled together in one indictment, under a charge of "conspiracy against the Republic;" and that fatal word was sufficient to warrant a proceeding for life and death against a crowd of men and women, total strangers to each other, but who had all, from some ground or other, awakened the jealousy of the Decemvirs. The slightest symptom of disapprobation at the existing régime—a word, a look, a gesture, a sigh, a tear, were sufficient, if deposed to by the most infamous witness, to secure an immediate condemnation; and upon a charge of conspiracy with others whose principles and connexions were diametrically opposed to theirs, thus included with them in the same doom. In this way crowds of Royalists and Anarchists were sent to the scaffold together because the one had been connected with those who blamed the Revolution for going too far, the other for not going far enough. Even a declaration by women that they were pregnant, often failed in procuring so much as a temporary suspension of their fate.†

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40

Increased
executions
by the Revo-
lutionary
Tribunal.

* A curious proof of this extraordinary rapidity came out subsequently on the trial of Fouquier Tinville. Wolf, one of the clerks of the Revolutionary Tribunal, being asked how it happened that some persons had been executed whose sentences had not even been signed, gave the following answer—"No criminal could be executed without a certificate of the sentence from the principal clerk of court, and the clerk, for his own safety, would not give the certificate till he had the sentence signed by the judge. But the time being too short for copying out these judgments the same day, the clerk obtained the judge's signature to a form, which he could fill up each day at his leisure, and in the mean time he ran no risk in giving the requisite certificate. But in this instance, where the sentence produced is still blank, Legris, the clerk who wrote it, was himself arrested at five o'clock next morning, and executed at four o'clock in the afternoon."—*Procès de Fouquier Tinville. Bull. du Trib. Rév. No. 22.*

† "I saw," said Wolf, a clerk of the Revolutionary Tribunal, "at least

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A deplorable *equality*^a was observed between the number of persons indicted one day before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and that which appeared next day in the columns of the *Moniteur* as having perished on the scaffold.* And so generally was the danger of expressing sympathy with the victims understood, that no tears were shed, nor did mournful visages appear even in the streets when the melancholy procession proceeded along, conveying them to the scaffold; and, if a dead body was seen on the wayside, the traveller, as in the days recorded by Tacitus, averted his eyes lest he should be seen to shudder, and denounced at the Jacobin Committee as a counter-revolutionist.¹

¹ Deux
Amis, xil.
328, 329.
Duval, *Souv.*
de la Ter-
reur, iv. 368,
372.

41.
Excessive
brevity of
the trials.

The trial of these unhappy captives was as brief as during the massacres in the prisons. "Did you know of the conspiracy of the prisons, Dorival?" "No."—"I expected no other answer, but it will not avail you." To another—"Are not you an ex-noble?" "Yes." To a third—"Are you not a priest?" "Yes, but I have taken the oath." "You have no right to speak; be silent."—"Were not you architect to Madame?" "Yes, but I was disgraced in 1788."—"Had you not a father-in-law in the Luxembourg?" "Yes." Such were the questions which constituted the sole trial of the numerous accused; often

ten or twelve women executed the day they had declared themselves pregnant. Their cases were, indeed, referred to the medical men; but on their declining, through terror, to speak decidedly, they were all executed."—*Réponse de Wolf; Procès de FOUQUIER TINVILLE*, No. 22.

* The following were the numbers daily executed in Paris during the latter period of the Reign of Terror;—

						Executed.
17	Fralrial	or	5 June 1794,	...	...	25
18	—		6 —	...	...	26
19	—		7 —	...	...	27
20	—		8 —	...	...	26
21	—		9 —	...	...	23
22	—		10 —	...	...	18
23	—		11 —	...	...	27
24	—		12 —	...	...	25
25	—		13 —	...	...	30
26	—		14 —	...	...	43
27	—		15 —	...	...	33
28	—		16 —	...	...	41
29	—		17 —	...	...	56
1	Messidor		19 —	...	...	29
2	—		20 —	...	...	37
3	—		21 —	...	...	48
4	—		22 —	...	...	27
5	—		23 —	...	...	31
6	—		24 —	...	...	52
7	—		25 —	...	...	47
8	—		26 —	...	...	54

no witnesses were called; their condemnations were pronounced almost as rapidly as their names were read out; the law of 22d Prairial had dispensed with the necessity of taking any evidence when the court were convinced by moral presumptions. The indictments were thrown off by hundreds at once, and the name of the individual merely filled in; the judgments were printed with equal rapidity, in a room adjoining the court; and several thousand copies circulated through Paris by little urchins, exclaiming, amidst weeping and distracted crowds—"Here are the names of those who have gained prizes in the lottery of the holy guillotine!" The accused were executed soon after leaving the court, or at latest on the following afternoon.¹

Since the law of the 22d Prairial had been passed, the heads had fallen at the rate of thirty or forty a-day. "This is well," said Fouquier Tinville; "but we must get on more rapidly in the next decade; four hundred and fifty is the very least that must then be served up." To facilitate this immense increase, spies were sent into the prisons in order to extract from the unhappy wretches their secrets,

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¹ Procès de
Fouquier
Tinville,
Bull. du
Trib. Rév.
p. 54, 57
Deux Anna,
xii.
Tableau des
Prisons, xi
98. Th. vi
366, 367.

42.

Executions
still further
increased.

					Executed.
9 Messidor or	27 June 1794,	...	...	...	30
11 —	29 —	...	...	...	32
12 —	30 —	...	...	...	31
13 —	1 July	...	...	...	33
14 —	2 —	...	...	...	37
15 —	3 —	...	...	...	31
16 —	4 —	...	...	...	33
17 —	5 —	...	...	...	31
18 —	6 —	...	...	...	30
19 —	7 —	...	...	...	76
21 —	9 —	...	...	...	78
22 —	10 —	...	...	...	81
23 —	11 —	...	...	...	29
24 —	12 —	...	...	...	32
25 —	13 —	...	...	...	53
27 —	15 —	...	...	...	49
28 —	16 —	...	...	...	48
29 —	17 —	...	...	...	49
1 Thermidor or	19 —	...	...	...	51
2 —	20 —	...	...	...	47
3 —	21 —	...	...	...	52
4 —	22 —	...	...	...	54
5 —	23 —	...	...	...	74
6 —	24 —	...	...	...	43
7 —	25 —	...	...	...	47
8 —	26 —	...	...	...	55
9 —	27 —	— Robespierre's fall,	...	...	49
10 —	28 —	— With Robespierre,	...	...	27
11 —	29 —	— Robespierre's party,	73

—Compiled from the *Moniteur* of the above dates, a few days after each.

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and designate to the public accuser those who might first be selected. These infamous wretches soon became the terror of the captives. They were inclosed as suspected persons; but their real mission was soon apparent from their insolence, their consequential airs, the preference shown them by the jailers, and their orgies at the doors of the cells with the agents of the police. As they were sent there to get up a fresh conspiracy in the prisons, they were not long of accomplishing their purpose. A hundred and seventy were denounced at the Luxembourg alone. The spies, whose mission was soon discovered, were caressed, implored by the trembling prisoners, and received whatever little sums they had been able to secret about their persons, to keep their names out of the black list; but in vain.* The names of such as they chose to denounce were made up in a list, called in the prisons "The Evening Journal," and the public chariots were sent at nightfall to convey them to the Conciergerie, preparatory to their trial on the following morning. When the unfortunate captives heard the rolling of the wheels of the cars which were sent to convey them, the most agonising suspense prevailed in the prisons. They flocked to the wickets of their corridors, placed their ears on the bars to hear the list, and trembled lest their name should be called out by the officers. Those who were named embraced their companions in misfortune, and received their last adieus: often the most heart-rending separations were witnessed; a father tore himself from the arms of his children, a husband from his shrieking wife. Such as survived had reason to envy the lot of those conducted to the den of Fouquier Tinville; restored to their cells, they remained in a state of suspense worse than death itself till the same hour on the following night, when the rolling of the chariot wheels renewed the universal agony of the captives.¹

To such a degree did the torture of suspense prey upon the minds of the prisoners, that they became not only reckless of life, but anxious for death. They realised the

¹ Deux
Amis, xii.
331, 332.
Tableau des
Prisons, ii.
29, 37. Th.
vi. 368, 369.
Hist. de la
Conv. iii.
386, 388.

* Immense sums of money were given by such of the captives as had succeeded in secreting any to these wretches to procure even a temporary respite from insertion in the fatal lists, nor did they despise the smallest bribes. Sometimes their gratifications were as high as 400 louis; sometimes as low as a bottle of brandy.—*Tableau Historique de la Maison Lazare*, p. 53.

terrible peculiarity which Dante describes as the last aggravation of the Infernal Regions—

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———“ Che è tanto greve
A lor, che lamentar gli fa sì forte :
Rispose ; Dierolti molto breve.
Questi non hanno speranza di morte.” •

1784.

The inhabitants who had reason to apprehend detention, became indifferent to all the precautions requisite to secure their safety ; many who had escaped voluntarily surrendered themselves to their persecutors, or waited, on the high-road, the first band of the National Guard to apprehend them. The young Princess of Monaco, in the flower of youth and beauty, after receiving her sentence, declared herself pregnant, and obtained a respite ; the horrors of surviving those she loved, however, so preyed upon her mind, that the next day she retracted her declaration. “ Citizens,” said she, “ I go to death with all the tranquillity which innocence inspires.” Soon after, turning to the jailer who accompanied her, she gave him a packet, containing a lock of her beautiful hair, and said—“ I have only one favour to implore of you, that you will give this to my son : promise this as my last and dying request.” Then turning to a young woman near her, recently condemned, she exclaimed—“ Courage, my dear friend ! Courage ! Crime alone can show weakness !” She died with sublime devotion, evincing in her last moments, like Madame Roland and Charlotte Corday, a serenity scarcely ever witnessed in the other sex.¹

43.
Agony of
the prison-
ers. Death
of the Prin-
cess of Mon-
aco.

1 Tableau
des Prisons,
in. 39. 40.
Deux Amis,
xii. 329, 330.
Lac. ii. 164,
166.

Madame Lavergne had hoped that, by her intercession, she would move the hearts of the judges in favour of her husband, the commandant of Longwy. When she saw that all was unavailing, and that sentence of death was pronounced, a cry of *Vive le Roi* was heard ; all the spectators trembled at the fatal words. *Vive le Roi !* exclaimed Madame in more energetic terms ; and when those next her exclaimed that she had lost her reason, she repeated the same words in a calmer voice, so as to leave no room for doubt as to her deliberate intention. She obtained the recompense she desired in dying beside her husband. Soon

44.
Heroic devo-
tion of sev-
eral prison-
ers.

• “ What doth aggrieve them thus,
That they lament so loud ? He straight replied—
That will I tell thee briefly : these of death
No hope may entertain.”

• CARY'S DANTE, *Inferno*, iii. 43.

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after a sister followed the same method to avoid surviving her brother, and a young woman, to accompany the object of her affection to another world. Madame de Grammont, disdaining to employ words in her own defence, which she well knew would be unavailing, protested only the innocence of Mademoiselle du Chatelet who sat at the bar beside her.* Servants frequently insisted upon accompanying their masters to prison, and perished with them on the scaffold.† Many daughters went on their knees to the members of the Revolutionary Committee, to be allowed to join their parents in captivity, and, when brought to trial, pleaded guilty, though innocent, to the same charges. The efforts of the court and jury were unable to make them separate their cases; the tears of their parents even were unavailing; in the generous contention, filial affection prevailed over parental love. A father and son were confined together in the Maison Lazare; the latter was involved in one of the fabricated conspiracies of the prison; when his name was called out to stand his trial, his father came forward, and, by personating his son, was the means of saving his life, by dying in his stead.—“Do you know,” said the president of the Revolutionary Tribunal to Isabeau, “in whose presence you are standing?”—“Yes,” replied the undaunted young man; “it is here that formerly virtue judged crime, and that now crime murders innocence.”¹

1 Lac. ii.
164, 166.
Deux Amis,
xii. 331, 337.
Tableau des
Prisons, ii.
31, 46.

45.
Lavoisier,
Roucher,
and others.

The vengeance of the tyrants fell with peculiar severity upon all whose talents or descent distinguished them from the rest of mankind; the son of Buffon, the daughter of Vernet, perished without regard to the illustrious names they bore. When the former was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, on the charge of being implicated in the conspiracy in the Luxembourg, he said—“I was confined in the St Lazare, and could not have conspired in

* “I am aware,” said she, “it would be useless to speak about myself; but what has this angel done, (pointing to Madame du Chatelet)—she who never took any part in public strife, who belonged to no party, was involved in no intrigues, but was devoted only to works of conscious benevolence? There are others as innocent; none so little liable to suspicion as she.”—*SHRAC DE MEILHAN.* 147.

† “Oh spettacolo grande, ove a tenzone!
Sono amore e magnanima virtute!
Ove la morte al vincitor si pone
In premio, e'l mal del vinto è la salute.”

Gerusalemme Liberata, li 31.

the Luxembourg." "No matter," said Fouquier Tinville, "you have conspired *somewhere*;" and he was executed with the prisoners from the Luxembourg. On being brought to the scaffold, he said, "I am the son of Buffon," and presented his arms to be bound. Florian, the eloquent novelist, pleaded in vain, in a touching petition from prison, that his life had been devoted to the service of mankind, that he had been threatened with the Bastille for some of his productions, and that the hand which had drawn the romance of William Tell, and depicted a paternal government under Numa, could not be suspected of a leaning to despotism. He was not executed, as the fall of Robespierre prevented it; but he was so horror-struck with the scenes he had witnessed in prison, that he died after the hour of deliverance had arrived. Lavoisier was cut off in the midst of his profound chemical researches; he pleaded in vain for a respite to complete a scientific discovery; almost all the members of the French Academy were in jail, in hourly expectation of their fate. Roucher, an amiable poet, a few hours before his death, sent his miniature to his children, accompanied by these touching lines—

"Ne vous étonnez pas, objets charmans et doux,
Si quelque air de tristesse obscurcit mon visage;
Lorsqu'un crayon savant dessinait mon image,
J'attendais l'échafaud et je songeais à vous."

André Chenier, a young man, whose eloquent writings pointed him out as the future historian of the Revolution, and Champfort, one of its earliest and ablest supporters, were executed at the same time. The former was engaged, immediately before his execution, in composing some pathetic stanzas, among which is to be found the following—

"Peut être avant que l'heure en cercle promenée
Ait posé sur l'émail brillant,
Dans les soixante pas où sa route est bornée,
Son pied sonore et vigilant,
Le sommeil du tombeau pressera mes paupières" —

At this unfinished stanza the pensive poet was summoned to the guillotine. His brother Joseph, who had the power to save his life, refused to do so—even to the tears of their common parent prostrate before him: literary jealousy steelled the young revolutionist against the first feelings of nature.¹ A few weeks longer would have

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¹ Vie de
Florian,
Œuvres, i.
181, 183.
Lac. xi. 48,
49, and Pr.
Hist. ii. 186,
167. Th. vi.
428.
D'Israeli,
Lit. Char.
ch. 15, p.
236. Deux
Amis, ali.
332, 333

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46.

Execution of
Malesherbes
and his
whole fami-
ly with
D'Espre-
menil.
April 22.

swept off the whole literary talent as well as dignified names of France.

In the midst of the general massacre, Malesherbes, the generous and intrepid defender of Louis XVI., was too immaculate a character to escape destruction. For some time he had lived in the country, in the closest retirement; a young man accused of emigration, concealed in his house, furnished a pretext for the apprehension of the venerable old man and all his family. When he arrived at the prison all the captives rose up and crowded round him; they brought him a seat: "I thank you," said he, "for the attention you pay to my age; but I perceive one amongst you feebler than myself—give it to him." He was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal along with his whole family: even the judges of that sanguinary court turned aside their heads to avoid beholding the heart-rending spectacle. They were all condemned together. His daughter, Madame de Rozambo, when preparing to mount the fatal chariot, perceived Mademoiselle Sombreuil, whose heroic devotion had saved her father on the 2d of September, but who had again followed him to prison. Throwing herself into her arms, she exclaimed—"You have had the good fortune to save your father, and I have the glory of dying with mine!" Malesherbes stumbled over a stone as he crossed the court, with his arms bound, to mount the chariot: he said, with a smile—"That is a bad omen: a Roman would have turned back." Recollecting, with the malice of demons, the heroic manner in which he had come forward to defend the unhappy Louis, the monsters invented a new and peculiar species of torture for this noble character. He was selected as the *last* victim for execution, and had the agony of seeing his daughter, Madame Rozambo, and grand-daughter, Madame De Chateaubriand, with her husband, guillotined before his eyes; ere death put a period to his sufferings.* When bound to the plank, his grey hairs were observed to be sprinkled with the blood of the children he had seen suffer before him.¹ With him was included in the indictment

¹ Boissay
d'Anglas,
Vie de
Malesher-
bes, ii. 274.
Lac. ii. 147,
157. Biog.
Univ. xxvi.
366, 367.

* "Oh gioja! più gran pena che la morte
Dar ti, poss'io? Saveneti innanzi dunque,
Cadangli, Elettra pria. Pilade poscia:
Quand'ei sovr' essi cada."—ALFIERI, *Oreste*, Act iv. scene 4

—How identical is the infernal spirit of cruelty in all ages!

M. D'Espremenil, so long the idol of the populace of Paris, and who had done so much in its earlier stages to urge on the Revolution. He was condemned and executed with Malesherbes, and evinced the same sublime constancy in his last moments.

The next trial of note, and perhaps the most iniquitous of the many iniquitous ones which took place before the Revolutionary Tribunal, was that of the Farmers-general of the revenue. The only motive for their prosecution appears to have been the hope of obtaining something considerable from the confiscation of their estates; but the Committee of Public Salvation had much difficulty in finding any charge to prefer against them. On 5th May Dupin read a long report to the Convention, concluding with a motion, which, like all the others at that period, was unanimously adopted, that all the Farmers-general then living should be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal. Thither they were accordingly brought on the 8th, and at once condemned to be executed. The only thing like charge adduced against them was that of having made usurious profits, and *mixed water with their tobacco prior to 1776 to make it weigh heavier*; on these charges they were all straightway condemned. When going to the scaffold, it was discovered that in the hurry three subordinate officers had been sentenced instead of three Farmers-general, and twenty-eight only were executed; but the three missing ones were soon after got, all between seventy and eighty years of age, and guillotined without mercy.¹*

Madame Elizabeth, sister to Louis XVI., was the next victim. When she was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, the judges and the jury manifested an unusual degree of impatience for her condemnation. Like the King and Queen, she manifested the utmost composure and serenity when under examination; her answers, clear,

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47.
Trial of the
Farmers-
general.

1 Prudhomme, v. 374.
Procès des
Fermiers-
généraux.
Bull. du
Trib. Rév.
May 8.
Moniteur,
7th May.

48.
O! Madame
Elizabeth.
May 16.

* The sentence was in these terms:—"Qu'il est constant qu'il a existé un complot contre le peuple Français tendant à favoriser de tous les moyens possibles le succès des ennemis de la France, notamment en exerçant toute espèce d'exaction et de concussion sur le peuple Français en mêlant au tabac de l'eau et des ingrédients nuisibles à la santé, en prenant 6 à 10 pour cent."—*Bulletin du Tribunal Révolutionnaire, May 8, 1794.* It appears from Dupin's evidence, when afterwards Fouquier Tinville was charged with this iniquity, that their death had previously been arranged by the Committee of Public Salvation.—*Procès de Fouquier Tinville; Bull. de Trib. Rév.; Réponse de Dupin, p. 2.*

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distinct, and perfectly true, left no room for suspicion or misconstruction. Being accused of having succoured some men who had been wounded in the Champs Elysées, on the occasion of the revolt, she replied—"Humanity alone led me to dress their wounds; I needed no inquiry into the origin of their sufferings to feel the obligation to relieve them. I never thought this a merit, but I cannot see how it can be considered as a crime."—"Admit, at least," said the president, "that you have nourished in the young Capet the hope of regaining the throne of his father."—"I devoted myself," said she, "to the care of that infant, who was the more dear to me as he had lost those to whom he owed his being." Being accused of being an accomplice of the tyrant—"If my brother had been a tyrant," she replied, "neither you nor I would have been where we now are." She was sentenced along with many others of illustrious rank and dignified virtue. On being taken to the room where the condemned were assembled, she exhorted them to die with so much calmness and serenity, that they were all encouraged by her example. On the chariot she declared that one of her companions had disclosed to her that she was pregnant, and thus was the means of saving her from destruction. When she had ascended the scaffold, having been appointed purposely to die the last, the executioner rudely undid the clasp which closed the veil across her breast. "In the name of modesty," she said to one of the bystanders whose arms were not tied, "cover my bosom."* She died with the

* "Ἡ δὲ καὶ θνησκουσ' ὁμῶς
Πολλὴν πρόνοιαν εἶχεν εὐσχημῶς πεσεῖν
Κρυπτοῦς ἂν κρύπτειν ὀμκατ' ἀρσένων χρεῶν."

EURIPIDES, *Hecuba*, 566.

A similar instance of heroic virtue in death occurred in a female martyr in the early Christian church. Perpetua and Felicitas, both Christians, were sentenced, in the year 203, to be killed by wild cattle at Carthage. They were both attacked accordingly by furious bulls, who tossed them on their horns. So violent was the shock that Perpetua fell on the ground stunned, but partially recovering her senses, she was seen gathering her torn clothes about her, so as to conceal her limbs, and after tying her hair, she helped Felicitas to rise, who had been severely wounded, and standing together they calmly awaited another attack. The people, struck by their heroism, called out that they should be sent to the place where those not killed by the wild beasts were dispatched by the "Confectorii," which was accordingly done. —Vide ST AUGUSTIN, *Sermons*, 281—294; and TERTULLIAN, *de Anima*, c. 55; THIEBOMONT, *Annales de l'Empire*, t. iii. p. 213. How interesting to find the noble conceptions of female virtue formed by the Greek poet, successively realised by the Christian martyr in the third and the royal victim in the eighteenth century.

serenity of an angel, praying for those who had taken her life. The beauty of her form, and the placidity of her expression, awakened sentiments of commiseration even among the most savage of the revolutionary spectators. With her was executed Madame de Montmorin—the same who, when the States-general walked in procession to church on May 4, 1789, expressed to Madame de Staël her distrust in the unbounded hopes of felicity to France which the latter anticipated from the Revolution.¹*

Custine, son of the celebrated general of the same name, was executed for having let fall some expressions of attachment to his father; Alexander Beauharnais for having failed to raise the siege of Mayence. The former had been offered the night before his execution the certain means of escape: he refused to make use of them, as his doing so would have endangered the life of the daughter of his jailer, who had generously been instrumental in arranging the plan for his delivery. The letter of the latter, the night before his execution, was couched in the most touching strains of eloquence. Marshal Luckner, whom the Jacobins had so long represented as the destined saviour of France; General Biron, whose amiable qualities, notwithstanding the profligacy of his character, had long endeared him to society; General Lamarlière, whose successful war of posts had so long covered the northern frontier; and many other distinguished warriors, were sent to the scaffold. All showed the same heroism in their last moments; but not greater than was displayed by pacific citizens and young women, who had been totally unaccustomed to face danger. It was in the class of nobles that the greatest courage was shown: they firmly protested their devotion to their God and their king, and their readiness to die in their service. The priests died like worthy martyrs of their faith, bestowing, to their last moments, the succours of religion on the captives about to suffer, with whom they were surrounded. Many of the peasants and poorer classes piteously bewailed their fate in being cut off, they knew not why, and condemned, they knew not with whom. Dietrich, mayor of Strasbourg, one of the most ardent friends of liberty, wrote to

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¹ Deux
Amis, xii.
287, 293.
Duchesse
d'Angou-
lême, Mém.
Sup. à la
Rev. iv. 292.

49.
Of Custine's
son, Luck-
ner, Biron,
and Die-
trich.

* Ante, c. iv. § 4. Her husband had been murdered in the prisons on September 2.

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1 Russie en
1839, par le
Marquis
Custine, i.
42. Deux
Amis, xii.
91. Lac. ii.
160. Duval,
Souv. de la
Terreur, iv.
169, 175.

his son the night before his execution—"As he valued his last blessing, never to attempt to revenge his death." One prisoner alone excited the contempt of the spectators, by raising piteous cries on the chariot, and striving in a frenzy of terror with the executioners on the scaffold: it was Madame du Barri, the associate of the infamous pleasures of Louis XV. She piteously prayed for a minute's respite, and uttered shrieks when bound to the plank which froze every heart with horror. Yet was this lamentable spectacle not without a beneficial effect: it recalled the people to a sense of the horror of the punishment, which, from the general heroism or resignation of the victims, had come, strange to say, to be almost forgotten.^{1*}

50.
Execution of
the young
women from
Verdun and
Montmar-
tre.

While prostituted beauty was thus evincing a fearful picture of the weakness of splendid guilt in its last moments, the courage with which a number of young women, supported by the recollections of virtue and the influence of religion, underwent the same fate, excited universal astonishment and sympathy. Two cases in particular, at the very close of the Reign of Terror, attracted general notice, and contributed in no small degree to produce a general heart-sickening at the reign of blood. They are thus described by an eyewitness of these melancholy scenes:—"On the 28th of May fourteen young women of Verdun were brought out for execution together, for no other crime but that of having presented bouquets of flowers to the King of Prussia, when he entered the town in 1792. They were all alike dressed in white, as if they had been going to a marriage. Their youth, their beauty, their innocent air, touched even the most savage hearts with pity, and many tears were secretly shed at the sight of so many innocent human beings being taken together to the scaffold. It was generally observed, after they had been guillotined, that it was like cutting the spring out of the

* "C'est dans la classe des nobles que j'ai vu," says an eyewitness, "le plus de courage: ils vantaient hautement leur attachement inaltérable pour la royauté, et leur dévouement sans bornes pour leur roi: ils repandaient avec joie leur sang sur l'échafaud pour la cause de monarchie. Mais ce qui était un objet général d'attendrissement c'était la résignation touchante des ministres de la religion Chrétienne. Ils assistaient dans leur dernier moment les malheureux prisonniers: ils leur prodiguaient toutes les consolations célestes, et leur faisaient envisager la mort comme l'asyle de l'homme juste et persécuté: eux-mêmes donnaient l'exemple de toutes les vertus, et pratiquaient la moralité évangélique dans toute sa pureté."—*Tableau des Prisonniers de Paris pendant la Terreur, par un Témoin Oculaire*, i. 41, 42.

year. A few days after, the whole nuns of the Abbey of Montmartre, with the lady-abbess at their head, were executed together. They began to chant the *Salve Regina* as they left the doors of the Conciergerie, continued singing during their whole passage along the streets, and the mournful strain had not ceased, though they were eighteen in number, till the head of the last had fallen under the guillotine. Their constancy, piety, and resignation produced a profound impression on the multitude, long unaccustomed to impressions of that description, and for once silenced the furies of the guillotine,* who usually danced round the loaded chariots, singing revolutionary songs, from the time they left the doors of the Conciergerie till they reached the scaffold in the Place Louis XV. It was chiefly in consequence of the mournful impression produced by this execution, that the place of punishment was removed, first to the Place St Antoine on the 2d June, and on the 7th to the Barrier de Trône, in the Faubourg St Antoine."¹

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June 1.

¹ Duval,
Souv. de la
Terreur, iv.
376, 377.

Dreadful as were these scenes at Paris, the career of revolutionary revenge was, if possible, more strongly marked in the provinces than even in the metropolis. A full account of these atrocities would fill many volumes; but a few details, in addition to those contained in the former chapters, may serve as an example of the rest. The disturbances on the northern frontier led to the special mission of a monster named Le Bon to those districts, armed with the power of the Revolutionary Government. His appearance in these departments could be compared to nothing but the apparition of those hideous furies so much the object of dread in the times of paganism. In the city of Arras, above two thousand persons, brought there from the neighbouring departments, perished by the guillotine. To add to the tortures of his victim, Le Bon kept a man in suspense for a quarter of an hour under the blade of the guillotine, in order to augment the bitterness of death by reading, before it fell, a letter which he knew would distress him. Yet even these atrocities were palliated in the Convention, when the people of the north implored an investigation into them. "The proceedings of Le Bon," said Barère, "may have been a little *harsh as to form*; but these

51.
Cruelties in
the pro-
vinces.
Le Bon at
Arras.

* "Les lecheuses de la guillotine."

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charges have been suggested by wily aristocrats. The man who crushes the enemies of the people can never be a proper object of censure. What is not permitted to the hatred of a Republican against aristocracy? How many generous sentiments atone for seeming harshness in the prosecution of the public enemies? Revolutionary measures are ever to be spoken of with respect." The Convention passed to the order of the day. It is no wonder they did so; for it appears from a letter of the Committee of Public Salvation still extant, that his proceedings were expressly enjoined by themselves.* Mingling treachery and seduction with sanguinary oppression, this monster in the human form turned the despotic powers with which he was invested into the means of individual gratification. After having disgraced the wife of a nobleman, who yielded to his embraces in order to save her husband's life, he put the man to death before the eyes of his devoted consort; a species of treachery so common, says Prudhomme, that the examples of it were innumerable. Children whom he had corrupted were employed by him as spies upon their parents; and so infectious did the cruel example become, that the favourite amusement of this little band was putting to death birds and small animals, with little guillotines made for their use.[†]

† Th. vi 376, 377. Prudhomme, *Victimes de la Révolution*, iv. 274. Chateaub. *Etud. Hist.* i. 102, *Préface*. Monteur, 4th June.

* "Le comité, citoyen collègue, vous fait observer qu'investi de pouvoirs illimités vous devez prendre dans votre énergie toutes les mesures commandées par le salut de la chose publique. L'amnestie prononcée lors de la constitution Capétienne (celle de 1791) et invoquée par tous les scélérats est un crime que ne peut encouvrir d'autres; les forfaits contre la République ne se rachètent-ils que sous le glaive. Le tyran l'invoqua—le tyran fut frappé. Secouez sur les traîtres le flambeau et le glaive; marchez, citoyen collègue, dans cette ligne révolutionnaire que vous devez avec courage; le comité applaudit à vos travaux."—Signé, BARENE, BILLAUD VARENNES, CARNOT; *Paris, 27 jour du neuvième mois, l'an 2 de la République, (18th Oct. 1793.) Histoire de la Convention*, iii. 207.

† This monster was very amorous in his disposition, and mingled lechery with his cruelties. "Il ne caressait sa femme ou sa maîtresse qu'il ne dit pas en même temps 'Cette belle tête sera pourtant coupée dès que j'aurai commandé.'" . . . "Le Bon est revenu de Paris: tout de suite un jury terrible à l'instar de celle de Paris a été adopté au Tribunal Révolutionnaire. Un arrêté vigoureux a fait cliquemurer les femmes aristocrates dont les maris sont incarcérés et les maris dont les femmes le sont. Une perquisition vient d'être faite par une commission ardente de sept patriotes, (j'étais du nombre.) La guillotine depuis ce temps ne désespère pas: les ducs, les marquis, les comtes, les barons, males et femelles, tombent comme orlé."—DARTHE & ROBESPIERRE, No. 83.—*Pap. trouv. chez ROBESPIERRE; and Kap. de Courtois, Ibid.* i. 75.

It is a curious fact, highly illustrative of the progress of revolutions, that this monster in the human form was at first humane and inoffensive in his government, and that it was not till he had received reiterated orders from

The career of Carrier at Nantes, where the popular vengeance was to be inflicted on the Royalists of the western provinces, was still more relentless.* Five hundred children of both sexes, the eldest of whom was not fourteen years old, were led out to the same spot to be shot. Never was so deplorable a spectacle witnessed. The littleness of their stature caused most of the bullets, at the first discharge, to fly over their heads; they broke their bonds, rushed into the ranks of the executioners, clung round their knees, and with supplicating hands and agonised looks, sought for mercy. Nothing could soften these assassins; they put them to death even when lying at their feet.† A large party of women, most of whom were with child, and many with babes at their breast, were put on board the boats in the Loire. The innocent caresses, the unconscious smiles of these little innocents, filled their mothers' breasts with inexpressible anguish; they fondly pressed them to their bosoms, weeping over them for the last time. One of them was delivered of an infant on the quay; hardly were the agonies of childbed over, when she was pushed, with the new-born innocent, into the galley. After being stripped naked, their hands were tied behind their backs; their shrieks and lamentations were answered by strokes of the sabre; and while struggling betwixt terror and shame to conceal their nudity from the gaze of the executioners, the signal was given, the planks cut, and the shrieking victims for ever buried in the waves.

Carrier at
Nantes.

Robespierre, with a hint of a dungeon in case of refusal, that his atrocities commenced. Let no man, if he is not conscious of the utmost firmness of mind, be sure that he would not, in similar circumstances, have done the same.—DUCHESS D'ABRANTES, vii. 213, 214.

* "Tout sans exception est incendié, massacré, dévasté; des villes, des bourgs, des villages, habités par des patriotes, ont disparu, et le fer a achevé ce que la flamme épargnait. C'est ainsi qu'on a resuscité la Vendée."—Rapport de JULIEN fils à ROBESPIERRE, 30 Ventose 1794; *Papiers Inédits trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE*, No. 83.

† "Quis fuit ille dies, Marius quo mœnia victor
Corripuit? Quantoque gradu moræ sæva cucurrit?
Nobilitas cum plebe perit: lateque vagatur
Ensis; et a nullo revocatum est pectore ferrum.
Stat cruor in templis; multaque rubentia cæda
Lubrica saxa madent: Nulli sua profuit ætas.
Non sensis extremum piguit, vergentibus annis,
Præcipitasse diem; nec, primo in limine vitæ,
Infantis miseri nascentia rumpere fata.
Crimine quo parvi cadem potuere mereri?
Sed satis est, jam posse mori—trahit ipse furoris
Impetus; et visum lentis, quæsisse nocentem."

LUCAN, *Pharsalia*, li. 99.

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¹ Prudhomme, v. 27. Chateaub. Etud. Hist. l. 102. Louvet, 123.

Human cruelty, it would be supposed, could hardly go beyond these executions; but they were surpassed by Le Bon* at Bordeaux. A woman was accused of having wept at the execution of her husband; she was condemned, amidst the applauses of the multitude, to sit several hours under the suspended blade, which shed upon her, drop by drop, the blood of the deceased, whose corpse was above her on the scaffold, before she was released by death from her agony.^{††}

53.
General apathy of the class of proprietors.

One of the most extraordinary features of these terrible times, was the apathy which the better classes both in Paris and the provinces evinced, and the universal disposition to bury anxiety in the delirium of present enjoyment. The people who had escaped death went to the operas daily, with equal unconcern whether thirty or a hundred heads had fallen during the day. The class of proprietors at Bordeaux, Marseilles, and all the principal towns, timid and vacillating, could not be prevailed on to quit their hearths; while the Jacobins, ardent, reckless, and indefatigable, inured to crime, plunged a merciless sword into the bosom of the country. The soldiers every where supported their tyranny; the prospect of ransacking cellars, ravishing women, and plundering coffers, made them universally faithful to the government. "When in a country which we all conceived to be on the point of regeneration," says Louvet, "the men of property were every where so timid, and the wicked so audacious, it became evident that all assemblages of men, once dignified with the name of the people by such fools as myself, are, in truth, nothing more than an imbecile herd, too happy to be permitted to crouch under the yoke of a despotic master."[‡]

² Louvet, 124, 125. Mercier's Tab. de Paris, iv. 372.

The Committee of Public Salvation incessantly urged Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser, to accelerate the executions. He himself declared, on his subsequent trial—"That on one occasion they ordered him to increase

* Son of the Le Bon at Arras.

† The principle of the commissaries at Bordeaux was to destroy the mercantile aristocracy. "Il faut tuer l'aristocratie mercantile, comme on a tué celle des prêtres et des nobles. Les commissaires frappent à coup sûr; ils ne font grâce à personne; parcequ'ils sont convaincus que si les aristocrates n'ont pas pris une part active dans les conspirations, ils n'ont pas moins appelé la contre-révolution dans leur cœur."—*Papiers Inédits trouvés chez BONAPARTE*; DAILLET, No. 84; BAISSANT, No. 85; and *Rapport de Courtois*, vol. i. 75, 76.

them to one hundred and fifty a-day, and that the proposal filled his mind with such horror, that, as he returned by the Seine, the river appeared to run red with blood, and the pavement on the streets to be strewn with decapitated human heads." The pretended conspiracy in the prisons served as an excuse for a frightful multiplication in the number of victims. One hundred and sixty were denounced in the prison of the Luxembourg alone; and from one to two hundred in all the other prisons of Paris. A fabricated attempt at escape in the prison of La Force, was made the ground for sending several hundreds to the Revolutionary Tribunal. Fouquier Tinville had made such an enlargement of the hall of that dreaded court, that room was afforded for one hundred and sixty to be tried at once; and he proposed to place at the bar the whole prisoners charged with the conspiracy in the Luxembourg at one sitting. He even went so far as to erect a guillotine in the court-room, in order to execute the prisoners the moment the sentence was pronounced; but Collot d'Herbois objected to this, as tending "to demoralise punishment." A guillotine had been prepared, however, with four blades placed crossways, which could behead four prisoners at once.¹

But there is a limit to human suffering; an hour when indignant nature will no longer submit, and courage arises out of despair. That avenging hour was fast approaching. The lengthened files of prisoners daily led to the scaffold, had long excited the commiseration of the better classes in Paris; the shops in the Rue St Honoré were shut, and its pavement deserted, when the melancholy procession, moving towards the Place de la Révolution, passed along. Alarmed at these signs of dissatisfaction, the committee changed the place of execution, and fixed it first on the Place St Antoine, and soon after at the Barrière de Trône, in the Faubourg St Antoine; but even the workmen of that revolutionary district manifested impatience at the constant repetition of the dismal spectacle. The middle classes, who constituted the strength of the National Guard at Paris, began to be alarmed at the rapid progress and *evident descent* of the proscriptions. At first the nobles and ecclesiastics only were included; by degrees the whole landed proprietors were reached; but

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54.
Efforts of
the Com-
mittee of
Public Sal-
vation to
increase the
massacres.

¹ Deux
Amis, xii.
365, 374.
Th. vi. 363,
364. Jac.
ii. 161.
Hist. de la
Conv. iii.
386, 388.
Duval, Souv.
de la Ter-
reur, iv. 381.

55.
Horror at
length excit-
ed by the
number and
descent of
the execu-
tions.

June 2.

June 7.

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¹ *Moniteur*,
June 1 to
July 28.
Deux Amis,
xii. 342.
Lac. xi. 53,
56. *Th.* vi.
370.

new the work of destruction seemed to be fast approaching every class above the lowest. On the lists of the Revolutionary Tribunal, in the latter days of the Reign of Terror, are to be found tailors, shoemakers, hairdressers, butchers, farmers, mechanics, and workmen, accused of anti-revolutionary principles. From the 10th June to the 17th July, that court had sentenced twelve hundred and eighty-five persons to death. The people felt pity for these proscriptions, not only from their frequency, but their near approach to themselves. Their reason was at length awakened by the revolutionary fever having exhausted itself; humanity began to react against the ceaseless effusion of human blood, after all their enemies had been destroyed.¹

^{56.}
Opinions of
the Convention
on the
subject.

A considerable party in the Convention eagerly embraced the same sentiments; their conspicuous situation rendered it probable that they would be among the first victims, and every one, in the hope of saving his own life, ardently prayed for the downfall of the tyrants. It was well known in that Assembly that Robespierre had let fall some expressions, indicating an intention to destroy many of its members; and the law of 22d Prairial was regarded as a means of attaining that object. The Committee of Public Salvation was not ignorant of these dispositions. But these expressions of public feeling only inspired the oppressors with greater impatience for human blood. "Let us put," said Vadier, "a wall of heads between the people and ourselves."—"The Revolutionary Tribunal," said Billaud Varennes, "thinks it has made a great effort when it strikes off seventy heads a-day; but the people are easily habituated to what they always behold: to inspire terror we must double the number."—"How timid you are in the capital!" said Collot d'Herbois; "can your ears not stand the sound of artillery? It is a proof of weakness to execute your enemies; you should mow them down with cannon." The judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal, many of whom came from the galleys of Toulon, laboured incessantly at the work of extermination, and mingled indecent ribaldry and jests with their unrelenting cruelty to the crowds of captives who were brought before them.² An old man, who had lost the use of speech by a paralytic affection, being placed

² *Deux Amis*, xii. 351, 354.
Lac. xi. 53,
56. *Th.* vi.
370. *Mig.*
ii. 327.

at the bar, the president exclaimed—"No matter; it is not his tongue, but his head that we want."

The superstition or terrors of Robespierre furnished the first pretext for a combination to shake his power. The members of the different committees, alarmed for their own safety, were secretly endeavouring to undermine his influence, when the fanaticism of an old woman, named Catherine Theot, gave them the means of extending their apprehensions to a larger circle. She proclaimed herself the mother of God, and announced the approaching arrival of a regenerating Messiah. An ancient ally of Robespierre, Dom Gerle, was the associate of her frenzy; they held nocturnal orgies, in which Robespierre was invoked as the Supreme Pontiff. The Committee of Public Salvation, who were acquainted with all their proceedings, and from the majority of whom Robespierre was now almost entirely estranged, beheld, or feigned to behold, in these extravagances, a design to make him the head of a new religion, which might add to the force of political power the weight of spiritual fervour. Vadier was entrusted by the Committee with the duty of investigating the mysteries; his report, which was read amidst loud laughter in the Convention, represented the "conspiracy as the result partly of the immeasurable malice of the priests, partly of the formidable faction which the popular axe had destroyed!" It turned the fanatics into derision, but at the same time denounced them as worthy of death; and they were accordingly thrown into prison. The opponents of Robespierre, in the Committee and Convention, eagerly seized hold of this circumstance to connect his name with the remnants of former superstition, and expose it to that most formidable of all assaults in France, the assault of ridicule. Robespierre strove to save these fanatics, but his colleagues withstood his influence: irritated, he retired from their meetings, from which he was absent for the next six weeks, and confined himself to the club of the Jacobins, where his power was still predominant.¹

Naturally suspicious, the apprehensions of the tyrant now increased to the highest degree. His house was guarded by a body of Jacobins, armed with pistols, chiefly composed of jurymen from the Revolutionary Tribunal. He never went out unless attended by this obnoxious band,

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57.

Affair of Catherine Theot, which first shook the power of Robespierre.

12th June.

14th June.

¹ Rapport de Vadier. Hist. Parl. xxxiii. 242, 259. Mlg. II. 328. Lac. xi. 59. 61. Th. vi. 336, 337, 356, 357.

58. Suspicion of Robespierre awakened.

CHAP. His table was covered by letters, in which he was styled
 XV. the "Envoy of God," the "New Messiah," the "New
 1794. Orpheus."* On every side his portrait was to be seen in
 marble, bronze, or canvass, and below each, lines in which
 the Jacobinical poets extolled him above Cato and Aris-
 tides. In the bed of Catherine there was found a letter
 addressed to Robespierre, in which he was styled, "the
 Son of the Supreme Being," "the Eternal Word," "the
 Redeemer of the Human Race," "the Messiah designated
 by the Prophets." Old women wrote to him in the strain of
 the Song of Simeon, rejoicing they had lived to see the
 advent of the day of salvation. Children over the whole
 Republic were called after his name; the admiration with
 which he was surrounded approached to idolatry. But all
 his efforts, and all the adulation of his satellites, could not
 dispel the terrors which had seized his mind. In his
 desk, after his death, was found a letter in the following
 terms:—"You yet live! assassin of your country, stained
 with the purest blood of France. I wait only the time
 when the people shall strike the hour of your fall. Should
 my hope prove vain, this hand which now writes thy
 sentence, this hand which thy bewildered eye seeks in vain,
 this hand which presses thine with horror, shall pierce
 thee to the heart. Every day I am with thee; every hour
 my uplifted arm is ready to cut short thy life. Vilest of
 men, live yet a few days to be tortured by the fear of my
 vengeance; sleep to dream of me; let my image and thy
 fear be the first prelude of thy punishment. This very
 night, in seeing thee, I shall enjoy thy terrors: but thy
 eyes shall seek in vain my avenging form."²

¹ Papiers
 trouvés
 chez Robes-
 pierre, i. 57.
 Deux Amis,
 xii. 363, 364.
 Mig. ii. 328.
 Lac. xi. 63.
 66. Hist.
 Parl. xxxiii.
 244.

* "Toi qui éclaire l'univers par tes écrits, saisis d'effroi les tyrans, et rassure le cœur de tous les peuples. Tu remplis le monde de ta renommée; tes principes sont ceux de la nature, ton langage celui d'humanité; tu rends les hommes à leur dignité; second créateur, tu régèneras ici-bas le genre humain.—J. P. BESSON."—*Papiers trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE*, ii. 116.

"Béni soit Robespierre, le digne imitateur de Brutus. Tous reposent sur votre zèle incorruptible. La couronne, le triomphe vous sont dûs, et ils vous seront déferés en attendant que l'encens civique fume devant l'autel que nous vous eleverons, et que la postérité reverera tant que les hommes connaîtront le prix de la liberté."—*Ibid.* ii. 118.

"Votre tache est écrite dans les livres du destin; elle sera digne de votre grande âme."—*Ibid.* ii. 119.

"Le nature vient de me donner un fils; j'ai osé le charger du poids de ton nom. * * * Je me suis dit à moi-même—Robespierre a toujours été et sera regardé dans les siècles futurs comme la pierre de l'angle du superbe édifice de notre constitution. Plaise à Dieu que pour finir ton ouvrage tu ne confie qu'à toi-même l'exécution de ton plan et de tes desseins."—*Ibid.* ii. 125, 126.

His violent partisans strongly urged the immediate adoption of the most vigorous measures. Henriot, and the Mayor of Paris, were ready to commence a new massacre, and had a body of three thousand young assassins ready to aid those of September 2d; St Just and Couthon were to be relied on in the Committee of Public Salvation; the president Dumas, and the vice-president Coffinhal, were to be depended on in the Revolutionary Tribunal. "Strike soon and strongly," said St Just. "DARE! that is the sole secret of Revolutions." The secret designs of Robespierre are clearly revealed in the following letter, written to him at this period by Payan, then mayor of Paris, and entirely devoted to his interests:—"The change of all others most essential, is to augment the powers of the central government—all our authority is useless; it is alone by augmenting the central power that any good can be done.* Would you crush the refractory deputies, obtain great victories in the interior; bring forward a report which may strike at once against all the disaffected. Pass salutary decrees to restrain the journals; render all the public functionaries responsible to you alone: let them be incessantly occupied in centralising public opinion: hitherto your efforts have been confined to the centralising of the physical government. I repeat it: you require a vast report, which may embrace at once all the conspirators, blend them all together; the Dantonists, the Royalists, the Orleanists, the Hébertists, the Lafayettists, the Bourdonists. Commence the great work." They had already marked out Tallien, Bourdon de l'Oise, Thuriot, Roveré, Lécointre, Panis, Monestier, Legendre, Fréron, Barras, and Cambon, as the first victims. But the conspirators had no armed force at their command: the club of the Jacobins, which they wielded at pleasure, was only powerful from its weight on public opinion; the committees of government were all arrayed on the other side. Robespierre, therefore, was compelled to commence the attack

* "Apprenez à tous les citoyens de la France qu'une mort infâme attend tous ceux qui s'opposent au gouvernement révolutionnaire; que les auteurs de Rapports fassent de réflexions salutaires, et que le Comité du Salut Public acquiesce le plus de confiance, et plus d'importance, et plus d'autorité: *Augmentons, augmentons la masse du pouvoir central, pour qu'elle écrase facilement tous les conspirateurs. Vous ne pouvez pas choisir de circonstances plus favorables pour frapper tous les conspirateurs.*" —PAYAN à ROBESPIERRE, 9 Messidor, Ann. II. *Papiers trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE*, ii. 359, 364.

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59.
Henriot and
St Just urge
vigorous
measures.

1 Deux
Amis, xii.
354, 361.
Hist. Parl.
xxxiii. 356,
397, 398.
Papiers
Inédits
trouvés chez
Robes-
pierre, i. 52,
55; and ii.
365.

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if the Convention:¹ he expected to sway them by the terror of his voice; or if, contrary to all former precedent, they held out, his reliance was on the municipality, and an insurrection of the people, similar to that which had been so successful on the 31st May. By their aid he hoped to effect the proscription of the Committee of Public Salvation, and their associates in the Mountain, as he had formerly done that of the Girondists, and of the Committee of Twelve, and measures were in preparation at the Hotel de Ville for carrying these intentions into effect.*

60.
Insurrection
agreed on at
the Jacobins.
21st July.

In a meeting of the Jacobins, held on the 3d Thermidor, (21st July,) he prepared the minds of the audience for a revolt against the Convention. "The Assembly," said he, "labouring under the gangrene of corruption, and unable to throw off its impurities, is incapable of saving the Republic: both will perish; the proscription of the patriots is the order of the day. For myself, I have one foot in the grave; in a few days I shall place the other in it; the result is in the hands of Providence. You see between what shoals we are compelled to steer; but we shall avoid shipwreck. Generally speaking, the Convention is pure: it is above fear as above crime. It has nothing in common with a knot of conspirators. For my own part, happen what may, I declare to the counter-revolutionists, who seek their own safety in the ruin of their country, that, despite all intrigues directed against me, I will continue to unmask the traitors, and to succour the oppressed." The Jacobins were by these and similar addresses prepared for a revolutionary movement; but the secret of the insurrection, which was fixed for the 9th Thermidor, was confided only to Henriot and the Mayor of Paris.¹

1 Mig. II.
329, 331.
Lac. xi. 68.
Th. vi. 355,
411. Journ.
de la Mont.
No. 85, p.
690.

The leaders of the Convention and of the Committees, on their side, were not idle. The immediate pressure of danger had united all parties against Robespierre. He made no secret, in the popular Society, of his resolution

* "Arrêté Conseil-Général de la commune de Paris, 9 Thermidor. Collet d'Herbois, Amar, Leonard Bourdon, Fréron, Tallien, Denis, Carnot, Dubois Crancé, Vadier, Javogues, Fouché, Granet, et Moïse Bayle, seront arrêtés, pour délivrer la Convention de l'oppression où ils la retiennent. Une couronne civique est offerte aux généreux citoyens qui arrêteront ces ennemis du peuple. Les mêmes hommes qui ont renversé le tyran et la faction Brissot, anéantiront tous ces scélérats désignés qui ont osé plus que Louis XVI. puisqu'ils ont mis en arrestation les meilleurs patriotes."
—*Pièce inédite trouvée chez ROBESPIERRE; Hist. Parl. xxxiii. 356.*

to decimate the Convention. At leaving one of the meetings where his designs had been openly expressed, Barère exclaimed—"That Robespierre is insatiable; because we won't do every thing he wishes, he threatens to break with us. If he speaks of Thuriot, Guffroi, Roveré, and all the party of Danton, we understand him; even should he demand Tallien, Bourdon de l'Oise, Legendre, Fréron, we may consent in good time; but to ask Duval, Audoin, Leonard Bourdon, Vadier, Vouland, is out of the question. To proscribe members of the Committee of General Safety, is to put the poniard to all our throats." Impressed with these feelings, they resolved to stand on their guard; though they did not venture to commence an attack on Robespierre, whose name was terrible, and his influence still so much the object of dread. Tallien was the leader of the party, an intrepid man, and an old supporter of the revolutionary tyranny; but who had been awakened, during his sanguinary mission to Bordeaux, to better feelings, by the influence of a young woman with whom he lived, afterwards well known as Madame Tallien, of extraordinary beauty, and more than masculine firmness of character.¹

Meanwhile the leaders of the opposite parties, who now divided equally the Committees and the Convention, were diverging from each other as much in the measures which they severally advocated, as in the preparations they were making for mutual hostility. Alienated from his colleagues in the committees, disgusted with the universal turpitude and corruption with which government was surrounded, and seriously alarmed at the growing influence of public opinion, which daily called loudly for a stop to the carnage, Robespierre began at length to see the necessity of arresting the terrible effusion of blood, which had doubled in Paris since he had ceased to attend the Committee of Public Salvation. He meditated the destruction of Colloot d'Herbois, Barère, and Billaud Varennes, as well as nearly all the members of the Committee of General Safety. He began to see the hopelessness of going on destroying till every Royalist, Intriguer, Dantonist, or guilty functionary was no more; he became alive to the dreadful nature of the system of government when it had ceased to be immediately directed by himself, and threatened

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61.
Measures of
the Convention
to resist
it.

¹ Vilate,
Causes Se-
crets de la
Rév. du 9th
Therm. 37.
Hist. Parl.
xxxiii. 357.
Mig. ii. 329
Lac. xi. 69,
70. Th. v.
410.

62.
Robes-
pierre at
length in-
clines to
stop the
effusion of
blood.

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1794.

a dangerous reaction. His private letters to his brother, during the six weeks which preceded his fall, deplored the system which was going forward, and its fatal effect in alienating by the horror it excited the supporters of the Revolution. He was seldom, between the 15th June and the 24th July, to be seen at the Convention; but his speeches at the Jacobin club loudly repelled the accusations of cruelty brought against the committee, professed a disposition to return at last to a more moderate system of government, and openly announced the necessity of destroying the tyrants who were oppressing innocence throughout France.¹*

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxxiii. 320,
328, 341.
Journ. de la
Mont. vol.
v. No. 77,
p. 625.

* This appears more particularly in the debate at the Jacobins on 11th July (23 Messidor) 1794, of which a very imperfect report is preserved. Robespierre then said—"Les principes de l'orateur sont d'arrêter l'effusion du sang humain versé par le crime. Les auteurs des complots dénoncés n'aspirent au contraire qu'à immoler tous les patriotes, et surtout la Convention Nationale, depuis que le Comité a indiqué les vœux dont elle devoit se purger. Quels sont ceux qui sans cause ont distingué l'erreur du crime, et qui ont défendu les patriotes égarés?—Ne sont-ils pas les membres du Comité? Ceux qui réclament la justice ne peuvent être redoutables qu'aux chefs de factions; et ceux qui veulent perdre dans l'opinion les membres du Comité ne peuvent avoir d'autre intention que de servir les projets des tyrans intéressés à la chute d'un comité qui les decouverte, et qui les anéantira bientôt."—*Journal de la Montagne*, 24 Messidor 1794, No. 77, vol. v. p. 25.

Napoleon was of opinion that the character of Robespierre had been too severely handled by subsequent writers. "He was of opinion," says Las Cases, "that Robespierre had neither talent, nor force, nor system: that he was the true emissary of the Revolution, who was sacrificed the moment that he strove to arrest it in its course—the fate of all those who before himself had engaged in the attempt; but that he was by no means the monster that was commonly believed." "Robespierre," said he, "was at last desirous to stop the public executions. He had not been at the Committees for six weeks before his fall; and in his letters to his brother, who was attached to the army at Nice, which I myself saw, he deplored the atrocities which were going forward, and ruining the Revolution by the pity which they excited. Cambacères, who is to be regarded as an authority for that epoch, said to me, in relation to the condemnation of Robespierre, 'Sire, that was a case in which judgment was pronounced without hearing the accused.' ('Un procès jugé, mais pas plaidé.') You may add to that, that his intentions were different from what is generally supposed. He had a plan, after having overturned the furious factions whom he required to combat, to have returned to a system of order and moderation." "Some time before his fall," said Cambacères, "he pronounced a discourse on that subject, full of the greatest beauties: it was not permitted to be inserted in the *Moniteur*, and all traces of it have, in consequence, been lost."—LAS CASES, i. 386. This is the one already referred to, pronounced at the Jacobins, 23 Messidor (11th July) 1794, *Journal de la Montagne*, v. 25. No. 77. Levasseur de la Barthe also strenuously supports the same opinion: maintaining that Robespierre was cut off just at the moment when he was preparing to return to a system of humanity and beneficence.—LEVASSEUR, iv. 110, 111. If this be true, it only augments the weight of the moral lesson to be derived from their history, that, even by such men, a return to order and justice was found to be indispensable, but that even to them the attempt at such a return was fatal.

During Robespierre's secession from the Committee of Public Salvation, however, that terrible body had lost none of its fearful and bloodthirsty energy. The daily executions in the capital had doubled, and now sometimes rose as high as seventy or eighty in a day; and on the 6th Thermidor, three days before the fall of Robespierre, the Committee of Public Salvation, "to judge more quickly the enemies of the people, in defention over the whole republic," had agreed to a decree appointing four popular commissions to try without juries the whole prisoners in the different jails in the departments.* The name of Robespierre is not affixed to this resolution; but it was entirely in conformity with a plan which Payan, his intimate friend, proposed to him, in order to dispose of *nine thousand prisoners* at Orange, who were summarily judged by a commission sent down from Paris, which destroyed them with unheard-of rapidity.†¹ And from a manuscript note in his own handwriting, found among Robespierre's papers after his death, there is one which openly announces the intention of cutting off the whole middle classes, and for that purpose arming against them the lower.‡

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1794.

63.

Measures of the Committee of Public Salvation during Robespierre's absence. July 23.

¹ *Papiers trouvés chez Robespierre, No. 94. Deux Amis, xii. 344, 350.*

* Les Comités de Salut Public et de Sureté Générale arrêtent—

1. Il sera nommé dans trois jours des citoyens chargés de remplir les fonctions de quatre commissions populaires créées par décret du 13 Ventose.

2. Elles jugeront tous les détenus dans les maisons d'arrêt des départements.

3. Elles seront sédentaires à Paris.

4. Les jugemens de ces commissions seront revisés par les Comités du Salut Public et de Sureté Générale.

5. Il sera distribué à chaque commission un arrondissement de plusieurs départements. (*Signé*) B. Barère, Dubarran, C. A. Prieur, Louis du Bas Rhin, Lavoicomerie, Collot d'Herbois, Carnot, Couthon, R. Lindet, Saint Just, Billaud Varennes, Vouland, Vadier, Amar, M. Bayle.—*Hist. Parl.* xxxiii 395

† "Neuf à dix mille personnes à mettre en jugement à Orange; impossibilité de les transférer à Paris. On propose, 1. Créer un Tribunal Révolutionnaire, qui siégera à Orange à l'effet de juger les contre-révolutionnaires du département de Vaucluse, et ceux des Bouches du Rhone. 2. Le composer d'un accusateur public et de six juges. 3. L'autorité se diviser en deux sections. 4. Il jugera Révolutionnairement, sans instruction écrite, et sans assistance du juré." This Tribunal accordingly was instituted, and the president, in a few days, wrote to Payan—"Nous avons plus fait dans le six premiers jours de notre activité qu'a fait dans un mois le Tribunal Révolutionnaire de Nîmes; nous avons rendu 197 jugemens dans 18 jours."—*Deux Amis*, xii. 344, 345; and *Papiers Inédits trouvés chez Robespierre*. i. 77, 372.

‡ "Il faut une volonté—une. Les dangers intérieurs viennent des bourgeois—il faut valoir le peuple. Il faut que les Sans-Culottes soient payés et restent dans les villes. Il faut leur procurer des armes, les éclairer en ce que l'insurrection s'étende de proche en proche et sur le même plan. Il faut

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64.
Contest
begins in
Convention.
Robes-
pierre's last
speech.

At length, on the 8th Thermidor, (26th July,) the contest began in the National Convention. The discourse of Robespierre was dark and enigmatical; but earnest and eloquent. "Citizens," said he, "let others lay before you flattering pictures. I will unveil the real truth. I come not to increase terrors spread abroad by perfidy; I come to defend your outraged authority, and violated independence; I will also defend myself; you will not be taken by surprise, for you have nothing in common with the tyrants who attack me. The cries of oppressed innocence will not offend your ears; their cause cannot be alien to you. Tyrants seek to destroy the cause of freedom, by giving it the name of tyranny; patriots reply only by the force of truth. Think not I am here to prefer accusations; I am coming to discharge duty: to unfold the hideous plots which threaten the ruin of the Republic. We have not been too severe. I call to witness the Republic, which yet breathes—the Convention, surrounded by the respect of the people—the patriots, who groan in the dungeons which wretches have opened for them. It is not we who have plunged the patriots in prisons; it is the monsters whom we have accused. It is not we who, forgetting the crimes of the aristocracy, and protecting the traitors, have declared war against peaceable citizens, and erected into crimes things indifferent, to find guilty persons every where, and render the Revolution terrible even to the people; it is the monsters whom we have to accuse.

"They call me a tyrant. If I were so, they would fall at my feet; I would have gorged them with gold, assured them of impunity to their crimes, and they would have worshipped me. Had I been so, the kings whom we have conquered would have been my most cordial supporters. It is by the aid of scoundrels you arrive at tyranny. Whither tend those who combat them? To the tomb and immortality! Who is the tyrant that protects me? What is the faction to which I belong? It is yourselves! What is the party which, since the commencement of the Revolution, has crushed all other factions—has annihilated

proscrire les écrivains comme les plus dangereux ennemis de la patrie, et punir surtout les députés et les administrations coupables. Si les députés sont envoyés la République est perdue."—*Note écrite de la main de ROBESPIERRE, Deux Amis, xii. 353. Papiers trouvés chez ROBESPIERRE, i. 36, and ii. 15.*

so many specious traitors? It is yourselves; it is the people; it is the force of principles! This is the party to which I am devoted, and against which crime is every where leagued.

"I am ready to lay down my life without regret. I have seen the past; I foresee the future. What lover of his country would wish to live when he can no longer succour oppressed innocence? Why should he desire to remain in an order of things where intrigue eternally triumphs over truth; where justice is deemed an imposture; where the vilest passions, the most ridiculous fears, fill every heart, instead of the sacred interests of humanity? Who can bear the punishment of seeing that horrible succession of traitors more or less skilful in concealing their hideous vices under the mask of virtue, and who will leave to posterity the difficult task of determining which was the most atrocious? In contemplating the multitude of vices which the Revolution has let loose pell-mell with the civic virtues, I own I sometimes fear I shall be sullied in the eyes of posterity by their calumnies. But I am consoled by the reflection, that if I have seen in history all the defenders of liberty overwhelmed by calumny, I have seen their oppressors die also. The good and the bad disappear alike from the earth; but in very different conditions. No, Chaumette, 'Death is *not* an eternal sleep!'—Citizens, efface from the tombs that maxim engraven by sacrilegious hands, which throws a funereal pall over nature, which discourages oppressed innocence; write rather, 'Death is the commencement of immortality!' I leave to the oppressors of the people a terrible legacy, which well becomes the situation in which I am placed: it is the awful truth, 'Thou shalt die!'

"We no longer tread on roses; we are marching on a volcano. For six weeks I have been reduced to a state of impotence in the Committee of Public Salvation; during that time has faction been better restrained, or the country more happy? Representatives of the people, the time has arrived when you should assume the attitude which befits you; you are not placed here to be governed, but to govern the depositaries of your confidence. Let it be spoken out at once: a conspiracy exists against the public freedom; it springs from a criminal intrigue in the bottom

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of the Convention; that intrigue is conducted by the members of the Committee of General Safety; the enemies of the Republic have contrived to array that Committee against that of Public Salvation; even some members of this latter have been infected; and the coalition thus formed seeks to ruin the country. What is the remedy for the evil? To punish the traitors; to purge the committees of their unworthy members; to place the Committee of General Safety under the control of that of Public Salvation; to establish the unity of government under the auspices of the Convention; and thus to crush faction under the weight of the national representation, and raise on its ruins the power of justice and freedom."¹

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxxiii. 406,
448.

65.
Vehement
debate on
this speech.

This speech was received with breathless attention; not a sound was heard during its delivery; not a whisper of applause followed its close. At the proposal that it should be printed, the first symptoms of resistance began. Bourdon de l'Oise opposed its publication; but Barère having supported it, the Assembly, fearful of committing itself openly with its enemies, agreed to the proposal. The members of the Committee of General Safety, seeing the majority wavering, deemed it now necessary to take decisive steps. "It is no longer time," said Cambon, "for dissembling; one man paralyses the Assembly, and that man is Robespierre."—"We must pull the mask off any countenance on which it is placed," said Billaud Varennes; "I would rather that my carcass served for a throne to the tyrant, than render myself by my silence the accomplice of his crimes."—"It is not enough," said Vadier, "for him to be a tyrant; he aims further, like a second Mahomet, at being proclaimed the envoy of God." Fréron proposed to throw off the hated yoke of the committees. "The moment is at last arrived," said he, "to revive the liberty of opinion. I propose that the Assembly shall reverse the decree which permitted the arrest of the representatives of the people; who can debate with freedom when imprisonment is hanging over his head?" Some applause followed this proposal; but Robespierre was felt to be too powerful to be overthrown by the Convention, unaided by the Committees; this extreme measure therefore was rejected, and the Assembly contented itself with reversing

the decree which ordered the publication of his address, and sent it to the committees for examination. "Had Robespierre," said Barère, "for the last four decades attended the Committee, or attended to its operations, he would have suppressed his address. You must banish from your thoughts the word *accused*." In the end Robespierre retired, surprised at the resistance he had experienced, but still confident of success on the following day, from the insurrection of the Jacobins and of the municipality.¹

In the evening he repaired to the popular Society, where he was received with enthusiasm. Henriot, Dumas, Coffinhal, and his other satellites, surrounded him, and declared themselves ready for action. After reading the speech he had delivered in the Convention, Robespierre said—"That speech is my last testament. I see how it is; the league against me is so powerful that I cannot hope to escape it. I die without regret. I bequeath to you my memory. You will defend it." "I know," says Henriot, "the road to the Convention, and I am ready to take it again."—"Go," said Robespierre, "separate the wicked from the weak; deliver the Assembly from the wretches who enthrall it; render it the service which it expects from you, as you did on the 31st May and the 2d June. March! you may yet save liberty!" After describing the attacks directed against his person, he added, "I am ready, if necessary, to drink the cup of Socrates."—"Robespierre," exclaimed David, "I am ready to drink it with you; the enemies of Robespierre are those of the country; let them be named, and they shall cease to exist."* Couthon then proposed the immediate expulsion of all the members of the Convention who had voted against the printing of his speech, and they were instantly, including Collot d'Herbois and Billaud Varennes, forcibly turned out, in the midst of mingled hisses and menaces. During all the night Robespierre made arrangements for the disposal of his partisans on the following day. Their points of rendezvous were fixed at the Hôtel de Ville, where they were to be in readiness to receive his orders from the National Convention.²

* David, much to his credit, admitted, after the 9th Thermidor, he had said this. "Robespierre s'écria qu'il ne lui resta qu'à boire la ciguë. Je lui dis, 'Je le boirai avec toi.'"—*Paroles de David, Séance du 10 Thermidor 1794; Journal de la Montagne*, 11, 23, p. 779, vol. v.

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¹ Hist. Parl. xxxiii. 448, 452. Journ. de la Mont. 9th Thermidor, vol. vi. No. 91. Lac. xi. 79. 80. Th. vi. 421, 424.

66.

Extraordinary meeting at the Jacobins.

² Hist. Parl. xxxiv. 23. Th. ii. 426, 427. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 39, 64.

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67.
Mutual pre-
parations
during the
night.

The two Committees, on their side, were not idle. During the whole night they sat in deliberation. It was felt by every one that a combination of all parties was required to shake the redoubted power of Robespierre. All their efforts, accordingly, were directed to this object. St Just continued firm to his leader; but, by unremitting exertions, the Jacobins of the Mountain succeeded in forming a coalition with the leaders of the Plain and of the Right. "Do not flatter yourselves," said Tallien to the Girondists, "that he will ever spare you; you have committed an unpardonable offence in being freemen. Let us bury our ruinous divisions in oblivion. You weep for Vergniaud—we weep for Danton; let us unite their shades by striking Robespierre.*" "Do you still live?" said he to the Jacobins; "has the tyrant spared you this night? yet your names are the foremost on the list of proscription. In a few days he will have your heads, if you do not take his. For two months you have shielded us from his strokes; you may now rely on our support as on our gratitude." The *Côté droit* long resisted the energetic efforts made by the Jacobins in the Convention to bring them over to a coalition, but at length they acquiesced: unable, as they themselves said, to bear any longer the sight of fifty heads falling a-day. The friends of Danton were so exasperated at the death of their leader, that they repelled at first all advances towards a reconciliation; but at length, moved by the intreaties of the Plain and the Right, they agreed to join the coalition. Before daybreak, all the Assembly had united for the overthrow of the tyrant.¹

¹ Durand de
Maillane, ch.
x. Hist.
Parl. xxxiv.
5. Deux
Amis, xii.
389. Lac.
vi. 88, 93.
Th. vi. 430,
431.

68.
Meeting of
the 9th
Thermidor.
July 27.

At an early hour on the morning of the 9th Thermidor, (27th July,) the benches of the Convention were thronged by its members; those of the Mountain were particularly remarkable for the serried ranks and determined looks of the coalition. The leaders walked about the passages, confirming each other in their resolution. Bourdon de l'Oise pressed Durand Maillane by the hand, Roveré and

* "Le ciel entre nos mains a mis le sort de Rome,
Et son salut depend de la perte d'un homme:
Si l'on doit le nom d'homme à qui n'a rien d'humain
A ce tigre altéré de tout le sang Romain!
Combien de fois changé de partis et de ligues,
Combien pour le repandre a-t-il formé des brigues;
Tantôt ami d'Antoine, et tantôt ennemi,
Et jamais insolent ni cruel à demi."

CORNEILLE, *Cinna*, Act 1, Scene 3.

Tallien followed his example—"Oh, the gentlemen of the *Côté droit* are honest men!" said the latter determined Jacobin. Tallien evinced that undoubting confidence which is so often the presage and cause of success. "Take your place," said he, entering from the lobby where he had been walking with Durand Maillane; "I have come to witness the triumph of freedom; this evening Robespierre is no more." At noon St Just mounted the tribune: Robespierre took his station on the bench directly opposite, to intimidate his adversaries by his look. But he could not bear the glance of Tallien, whose countenance expressed the greatest determination, and whom he with justice regarded as his most formidable adversary. Already his weakness on the approach of personal danger was manifest. His knees trembled, the colour fled from his lips as he ascended to his seat; the hostile appearance of the Assembly already gave him an anticipation of his fate.¹

St Just commenced the debate with a speech from the tribune. "I belong," said he, "to no party; I will combat them all. The course of events has possibly determined that this tribune should be the Tarpeian rock for him who now tells you that the members of the committees have strayed from the path of wisdom." Upon this he was violently interrupted by Tallien, who took the lead in the revolt. "Shall the speaker," said he, "for ever arrogate to himself, with the tyrant of whom he is the satellite, the privilege of denouncing, accusing, and proscribing the members of the Assembly? Shall he for ever go on amusing us with imaginary perils, when real and pressing dangers are before our eyes? After the enigmatical expressions of the tyrant yesterday from that place, can we doubt what St Just is about to propose? You are about," said he, "to raise the veil; I will tear it asunder!" Loud applauses on all sides followed this exclamation. "Yes," exclaimed he, "I will tear it asunder! I will exhibit the danger in its full extent; the tyrant in his true colours! It is the whole Convention which he now proposes to destroy: he knows well, since his overthrow yesterday, that, however much he may mutilate that great body, he will no longer find it the instrument of his tyrannical designs. He is resolved that no sanctuary should exist for freedom, no retreat for the friends of the Republic. He

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¹ Durand de Maillane, ch. x. Lac. xi. 94. Hist. Parl. xxxiv. 6. Deux Amis, xii. 389, 396. Th. vi. 432. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 123.

69.
Vehement eloquence of Tallien.

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1 Journ. de
la Mont. vol.
v. No. 92, p.
745. Hist.
Parl. xxxiv.
6, 31.

70.
Speech of
Hillaud Va-
rennes.

has in consequence resolved to destroy you all ; yes, this very day, ay, in a few hours. Two thousand assassins have sworn to execute his designs ; I myself last night heard their oaths, and fifty of my colleagues heard them with me. The massacre was to have commenced in the night with the Committee of Public Salvation and of General Safety, all of whom were to have been sacrificed except a few creatures of the tyrant ; the fidelity of the soldiers, who feared the Convention, alone has preserved them from this terrible calamity. Let us instantly take measures commensurate to the magnitude of the danger ; let us declare our sittings permanent till the conspiracy is broken, and its chiefs arrested. I have no difficulty in naming them ; I have followed their steps through their bloody conspiracy : I name Dumas, the atrocious President of the Revolutionary Tribunal ; I name Henriot, the infamous commander of the National Guard.”¹

Here Billaud Varennes interrupted the orator, and gave some fuller details on the conspiracy which had been matured in the Society of the Jacobins, and denounced Robespierre as its chief. “Yesterday,” said he, “at the Jacobins, were several base apostates ; hardly one of them had tickets of admission, but they fully developed the plan of massacring the Convention. There I saw the most infamous sallies vented against the men who have never deviated from the Revolution. I see on the Mountain there, some of the men who menaced the national representation.” At these words a cry arose—“Seize him, seize him !” and the individual alluded to was dragged from his seat and hurled out amidst loud applause. “The Assembly will perish,” he concluded, “if it shows the least signs of weakness.”—“We will never perish !” exclaimed the members, rising in a transport of enthusiasm from their seats. Tallien resumed : “Can there be any doubt now about the reality of the conspiracy ? have you conquered so many tyrants only to crouch beneath the yoke of the most atrocious of them all ? I see among you a new Cromwell. The charge against Robespierre is already written in your hearts. Is there one among you who will declare that he is not an oppressor ? If there is, let him stand forth ; for him have I offended. Tremble, tyrant, tremble ! see with what horror freemen shrink from your

polluted touch! We enjoy your agony; but the public safety requires it should no longer be prolonged. I declare, if the National Convention hesitate to pass the decree of accusation, I will plunge this dagger in your bosom;" and he drew the glittering steel from his breast in the midst of deafening shouts from the Assembly, which shook with the tumult. During this impassioned harangue, which was pronounced with the most vehement action, Robespierre sat motionless with terror. The Convention, amidst a violent tumult, declared its sittings permanent till the sword of the law had secured the Revolution, and decreed the arrest of Henriot, Dumas, and the other associates of the tyrant; and numerous measures of precaution were suggested.¹

Robespierre tried in vain, during the tumult which followed this address, to obtain a hearing. The president, Thuriot, whom he had often threatened with death, constantly drowned his voice by ringing his bell. In vain he looked for support among the former satellites of his power; all, frozen with terror, shrunk from his gaze. "*A bas le tyran!*" resounded from all sides of the hall. Barère then, in the name of the Committee of Public Salvation, related that an officer of the Allies, made prisoner in a late action in Belgium, had said—"All your successes will not avail you; we are not the less confident; we shall conclude a peace with a *fraction of the Convention*, and soon change the government." The government cannot conceal that this moment of danger is arrived. The committees are attacked; their members are covered with calumnies; the conspirators would destroy whatever intelligence or energy there is in the country, but denounce members on whose patriotism you are now to pronounce." On his motion the Convention decreed, by acclamation, that all ranks in the National Guard above that of chief of a legion should be suppressed, that each commander of a legion should command in his turn, and that the mayor and municipality of Paris should answer with their heads for the security of the Convention. This decree was levelled at Henriot. But Tallien, who perceived that, amidst these multifarious proposals, the main object of destroying Robespierre was likely to be forgot, resumed his place in the tribune. "Let us think only of the tyrant; you have not a moment to

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¹ Journ. de la Mont. No. 92, Vol. v Hist. Parl xxxiv. 21, 24; and Moniteur, July 29, p. 1272

71.
Dreadful agitation in the Assembly.

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lose, he is every hour collecting his strength. Why accumulate charges, when his conduct is engraven on every heart? Let him perish by the arm he has invented to destroy others. To what accused did he ever give the right of speaking in his defence? Let us say with the juries of the Revolutionary Tribunal, 'Our minds have long been made up.' If you declare him *hors la loi*, can he complain who has put *hors la loi* nine-tenths of France? Let there be no formalities with the accused; you cannot too much abridge their punishment; he has told you so himself a hundred times. Let us strike him in the bosom of the Assembly; let his associates perish with him on the bench of the Revolutionary Tribunal, in the club of the Jacobins, at the head of the traitorous Municipality.¹

¹ Hist. Parl.
xxxiv. 25, 29.
Journ. de la
Mont. Vol.
v. No. 92, p.
756. Lac.
xi. 100, 102.
Mig. ii. 338,
339.

72.
Contest of
Tallien and
Robes-
pierre.

"Were I," continued Tallien, "to recount the acts of individual oppression of which he has been guilty, I would say that, during the time when Robespierre was charged with the general police, they have all been committed, and that the patriots of the Revolutionary Committee of the Section of Indivisibility have been arrested."—"It is false!" cried Robespierre, "I"—"Loud cries drowned his voice. For a moment he fixed an eager gaze on the most ardent of the Mountain. Some averted their eyes; others looked down: the great majority remained motionless. Casting then a despairing look round the hall, he at length turned to the few survivors of the Girondists. "Turn away from these benches!" they exclaimed; "Vergniaud and Condorcet have sat here."—"Pure and virtuous citizens," said he to the deputies on the right, "will you give me the liberty of speech which the assassins refuse?" A profound silence followed the demand. "For the last time, President of Assassins," said he, turning to the chair, "will you allow me to speak?" The continued noise drowned his voice. "You shall not have it but in your turn;" and soon "Néver, never!" resounded on all sides.

"Diversi lingue, orribili favelle
Parole di dolore, accenti d'ira
Voci alte e fioche, e suon di man con elle
Facevan un tumulto, il qual s'aggrava
Sempre in quell'aria senza tempo tinta,
Come la rena quando il turbo spira."²

² "Various tongues,
Horrible languages, outcries of woe,
Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,

He then sank on his seat pale and exhausted; his voice, which had become a shrill scream from agitation and vehemence, at length totally failed; foam issued from his mouth. "Wretch!" exclaimed a voice from the Mountain, "You are choked by the blood of Danton." "Ah! you would avengé Danton," rejoined Robespierre; "cowards, why did you not defend him?" "I demand the arrest of Robespierre," cried Loiseau. "Agreed! agreed!" resounded on all sides. "Citizens," exclaimed Billard Varennes, "liberty is about to be restored."—"Say rather," replied Robespierre, "that crime is about to prevail: the Republic is abandoned to brigands." The act of accusation was then carried amidst the most violent agitation. The younger brother of Robespierre had the generosity to insist that he should be included in the charge. "I am as culpable as my brother," said he; "I share his virtues, I am willing to share his fate." Le Bas followed his example. At length the two Robespierres, Le Bas, Couthon, St Just, Dumas, and Henriot, were unanimously put under arrest, and ordered to be sent to prison; and the Assembly broke up, in the utmost agitation, at five o'clock.¹

During this frightful contest, the partisans of Robespierre were collecting at the hall of the Jacobins, and the Hôtel de Ville. They expected that he would be victorious in the Convention, and that the armed force would only be called on to support its decrees. Part of the National Guard were assembled at the rendezvous, when a messenger arrived from the Convention requiring the mayor to appear at the bar, and give an account of the state of the capital. "Return to your associates," said Henriot, "and say that we are in deliberation here how to purify their ranks. Tell Robespierre to remain firm and fear nothing." At half-past four they received intelligence of the arrest of Robespierre and his accomplices, which soon circulated with the rapidity of lightning through Paris. Instantly they gave orders to sound the tocsin, close the barriers, convoke the General Council, and assemble the Sections. The Jacobins declared their

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1 Lac. xi.
104. Toul.
iv. 392, 383.
Levasseur,
iii 147.
Hist. Parl.
xxxiv. 31, 34.
Journ. de la
Mont. No.
92, pp. 751,
752.

73.
Prepara-
tions to sup-
port Robes-
pierre at the
Hôtel de
Ville.

With hands together smote, that swell'd the sounds
Made up a tumult that for ever whirls
Round through that air with solid darkness stain'd,
Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies "

CARY'S DANTE, *Inferno*, iii. 25.

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sittings permanent, an energetic proclamation, calling on the people to rise, was issued from the Hôtel de Ville, and the most rapid means of communication were established between these two great centres of the insurrection.* To excite the people to revolt, Henriot, with a drawn sabre in his hand, at the head of his staff, traversed the streets, exclaiming, "To arms to save the country!"—In his course through the Faubourg St Antoine, he met the procession of forty-nine prisoners proceeding as usual to execution: the crowd had stopped the chariots, and loudly demanded that they should be released, which Samson, the long-practised executioner, had the humanity to support: but Henriot had the barbarity to order them to be led on, and they all suffered. On his return, two deputies of the Convention met him in the Rue St Honoré, and prevailed on some horsemen to obey the orders of the Convention, and arrest his person; he was handcuffed, and conducted to the Committee of General Safety. About the same time the national agent, Payan, was seized; the Convention seemed triumphant, its principal enemies were in confinement.¹

¹ Hist. Parl. xxxiv. 41, 47. Journ. de la Mont. No. 92. Deux Amis, xii. 398, 401. Moniteur, July 30, p. 1276. Lac. xi. 105, 109. Toul. iv. 384, 385. Th. vi. 442, 443. Hist. de la Conv. vi. 164.

74.
Robespierre is imprisoned, but liberated.

But the insurgents regained their advantage between six and seven o'clock, in consequence of the dispersion of the members of the Convention and the energetic measures of the municipality. Robespierre had been sent to the Luxembourg, where he was refused entrance, on the ground that the commune had prohibited them from receiving any prisoner but such as they had committed. He was then taken to the central police-office, where he was at once received in triumph by the officers of the municipality.

* The following proclamation was immediately issued from the Hôtel de Ville:—"Brothers and Friends, the country is in imminent danger: the wicked have mastered the Convention, where they hold in chains the virtuous Robespierre, who passed the decree so consoling to humanity on the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul: Couthon, that venerable citizen, who has but a heart and a head alive, though both are burning with patriotism; St Just, that virtuous apostle, who first checked treason in the army of the Rhine and the north; Le Bas, their worthy colleague; the younger Robespierre, so well known for his labours with the army of Italy; and who are their enemies? Collot D'Herbois, an old comedian, convicted under the old régime of having stolen the strong box of his troop of players; Bourdon de l'Oise, the perpetual calumniator of the municipality of Paris; one Barère, the ready tool of every faction which is uppermost; one Tallen, and Fréron, the intimate friends of the infamous Danton. To arms! To arms! Let us not lose the fruit of the 10th August and the 2d June. Death to the Traitors!"—Hist. Parl. xxxiv. 45.

The younger Robespierre had been sent to Saint Lazare, Couthon to the Bourbe, St Just to the Meosais, and the other conspirators to the different prisons of Paris. The magistrates sent detachments to deliver them; Robespierre was speedily brought in triumph to the Hôtel de Ville, where he was received with the utmost enthusiasm, and soon joined by his brother and St Just. Coffinhal set off at the head of two hundred cannoniers to deliver Henriot; he arrived in the Place de Carrousel, and having forced the guard of the Convention, penetrated to the rooms of the Committee of General Safety, and delivered that important leader.¹

The Assembly met at seven o'clock. Intelligence was immediately brought of the fearful successes of the insurgents, their insurrectionary measures, the liberation of the Triumvirs, the assemblage at the Hôtel de Ville, the convocation of revolutionary committees, and of the sections. In the midst of the alarm, the members of the two committees, driven from their offices, arrived in consternation with the account of the forcing of the Tuileries, the delivery of Henriot, and the presence of an armed force round the Convention. The agitation was at his height, when Amar entered and announced, that the terrible cannoniers had pointed their guns against the walls of their hall. "Citizens," said the President, covering his face with his robe, "the hour is arrived to die at our posts; the conspirators have made themselves masters, with an armed force, of the Committee-room of General Safety."—"We are ready to die," exclaimed the members. Animated by a sublime resolution every one spontaneously resumed his seat, and the Assembly unanimously took the oath. At this moment Goupilleau entered and announced that Henriot had been delivered; and was brought to the neighbourhood in triumph. An universal shudder upon this ran through the Assembly. The vociferous crowd in the gallery at the same time disappeared.²

In this extremity, Tallien and his friends acted with the firmness which in revolutions so often proves successful. "Every thing conspires," said they, "to assure the triumph of the Convention, and the liberty of France. By his revolt, Robespierre has opened to us the only path

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¹ Mlg. li.
342. Th. iv.
445. Deux
Amis, xii.
401. Hist.
Parl. xxxiv.
41, 49. Luc.
xi. 109.

75.

Extreme
danger of the
Convention.

² Hist. Parl.
xxxiv. 63,
65. Luc. xi.
112. Th. vi.
446, 447.
Toul. iv.
380, 383,
386. Hist.
de la Conv.
iv. 179.
Moniteur,
July 29, p.
1276.

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76.

Firmness of
Tallien and
his party.

which is safe with tyrants. Thank Heaven, to deliver our country, we need not now await the uncertain decision of a tribunal filled with his creatures! He has brought his fate upon himself; let us declare him *hors la loi* with all his accomplices; let us include the rebellious municipality in the decree; let us besiege him in the centre of his power; let us instantly convoke the sections, and allow the public horror to manifest itself by actions. Name a commander of the armed force; there must be no hesitation; in such a strife, he who assumes the offensive commands success." All these decrees were instantly passed; Henriot was declared *hors la loi*, and Barras named to the command of the military force; Fréron, Bourdon de l'Oise, Roveré, Leonard Bourdon, and other determined men, being associated with him in the perilous duty. The Committee of Public Salvation, as the other committee-room was lost, was now fixed on as the centre of operations. The *générale* beat, and emissaries were instantly dispatched to all the sections, to summon them to the defence of the Convention; while a macer was dispatched to summon the municipality to the bar of the Assembly. But such was the arrogance of that body in the anticipation of immediate victory, that they returned for answer—"Yes, we shall come to their bar, but at the head of the insurgent people."—"I invite," said Tallien, who had now taken the chair, "our friends to set out with the armed force. Let not the sun set before the heads of the conspirators have fallen."—"The moments are precious," said Billaud; "when you are on a volcano, you must act. Robespierre has just said, that before two hours had elapsed, he would march on the Convention. Shall we sleep? It is for us to anticipate him, and our enemies will be annihilated." Amidst loud shouts the commanders of the armed force set out on their perilous mission, to summon the National Guard.¹

While the government was adopting these energetic measures, Henriot was haranguing the cannoniers in the Place de Carrousel. The fate of France hung on their decision; could he have persuaded them to act, the Convention would have been destroyed before the tardy succours could arrive from the remoter quarters of the

¹ *Moniteur*,
July 24, p.
1276.

*Journ. de la
Mont. No.*
93, Vol. v.
p. 756.
Toul. iv.
387. *Th.*
vi. 447, 448.
Lac. xi. 112,
113. *Hist.*
de la Conv.
iv. 177.
Hist. Parl.
xxxiv. 72,
74.

capital. Happily they could not be brought to fire on the legislature, and their refusal decided the fortune of the day. Dispirited at this unwonted failure with the troops, and alarmed at the cries which broke from the multitude as soon as the decrees of the Assembly were known, he withdrew to the Hôtel de Ville, the armed force followed his example, and the Convention, so recently besieged within its walls, speedily became the assailing party. Paris was soon in the most violent state of agitation. The tocsin summoned the citizens to the Hôtel de Ville, the *général* called them to the Convention, the deputies of the Assembly, and the commissioners of the municipality, met in the sections, and strove for the mastery of those important bodies. On all sides the people hastened to arms; the streets were filled by multitudes crowding to their different rallying-points; cries of *Vive la Convention! Vive la Commune!* broke forth in the different columns, according to the prevailing opinion of their members; while the rolling of cannon and ammunition waggons by torchlight, gave a fearful presage of the contest that was approaching.¹

The emissaries of the municipality first arrived at the rendezvous of the sections; but the National Guard, distracted and uncertain, hesitated to obey the summons of the magistrates. They could only be brought, in the first instance, to send deputations to the commune, to inquire into the state of affairs. Meanwhile, the news of Robespierre's arrest circulated with rapidity, and a ray of hope shot through the minds of numerous proscribed individuals who were in concealment in the city. With trembling steps they issued from their hiding-places, and, approaching the columns of their fellow-citizens, besought them to assist in dethroning the tyrant. The minds of many were already shaken, those of all in a state of uncertainty, when, at ten o'clock, the commissioners of the Convention arrived with the intelligence of their decrees, of the summons to assist them, of the appointment of a new commander-in-chief, and of a rallying-point at the Hall of the Convention. Upon this they no longer hesitated; the battalions of the National Guard from all quarters marched towards the Convention, and defiled through the hall in the midst of the most enthusiastic applause. At mid-

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77.

The cannon-
iers desert
Henriot in
the Place de
Carrousel.
Dreadful
agitation at
Paris.

¹ Deux
Amis, xii.
402, 404.
Hist. Parl.
xxxiii. 73.
75. Lac. xi.
113, 115.
Toul. iv.
388. Th.
vi. 448.

78.

The sections
join the Con-
vention.

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¹ Hist. Parl.
xxxiv. 74.
75. Deux
Amis, xii.
404, 405.
Mém. ii. 342,
344. Lac.
xi. 114, 116.
Toul. iv.
380. Hist.
de la Conv.
iv. 189, 190.

night, above three thousand men had arrived. The forces, being deemed sufficient, were ordered to set out. A few battalions and pieces of artillery were left to guard the Assembly, and the remainder of the National Guard, under the command of Barras, marched at midnight against the insurgents. The night was dark, a feeble moonlight only shone through the gloom; but the forced illumination of the houses supplied a vivid light, which shone on the troops, who in profound silence, and in serried masses, marched from the Tuileries along the quays of the river towards the Place de Grève, the headquarters of the insurgents.¹

79.
The tumult
is heard in
the prisons.

The armed citizens who had come to the Tuileries to take part with Henriot and the commune, dismayed by their retreat to the Hôtel de Ville, now glided into the ranks of the attacking force, and the columns which marched down the quays towards the Place de Grève. Every one held his breath as they passed; the intense interest of life or death almost choked respiration. But in more distant quarters the agitation was more open; and a confused sound, like the rolling of distant thunder, was heard in all parts of the city. By degrees the tumult became so violent, that at length the sound reached the prisons. The unhappy inmates of the gloomy cells put their ears to the bars of the windows, listened to every sound, and yet trembled lest the agitation should be the prelude to a general massacre of the captives. Soon, however, the downcast looks of the jailors, words whispered to the ears of the framers of the lists, and the consternation of these wretches, threw a ray of hope through their despairing minds. Shortly after, it was discovered, by half-suppressed words heard in the streets, that Robespierre was in danger; the relations of the captives placed themselves under the windows, and informed them by signs of what was passing, and then the exhilaration of the prisoners broke out into the most vehement and tumultuous joy.²

² Deux
Amis, xii.
404. Th. vi.
450, 451.
Mém. de
Josephine,
par Cresset,
i. 257, 258.

Meanwhile, the adherents of Robespierre, consisting almost entirely of the cannoniers, and of the armed force commanded by Henriot, who were composed of the very lowest of the rabble, had assembled in great force at the

Hôtel de Ville. The Place de Grève was filled with artillery; bayonets, and pikes; Robespierre had been received with the utmost enthusiasm, and the delivery of Henriot raised to the highest pitch the confidence of the conspirators. But as the night advanced, and no columns of the National Guard arrived, this confidence gave place to the most sinister presentiments. Even in the Faubourg St Antoine; the centre of all former insurrections, the delegates of the municipality failed in rousing the populace. "What the better have we been," said they, "of all the insurrections? What has Robespierre done for us? Where are the riches, the fields he promised us? When we are dying of famine, does he expect to satisfy us by the daily spectacle of a hundred aristocrats dying on the scaffold? Does he suppose we are cannibals, to feed on human flesh, and drink human blood? He has done nothing for us; we will do nothing for him." Such was the language of the populace in the most revolutionary quarter of Paris: the fever of innovation had exhausted itself; even the lowest of the people were horror-struck with the rulers they had chosen for themselves.¹

At midnight the rumour began loudly to spread through the ranks of the insurgents, that the municipality had been declared *hors la loi*, that the sections had joined the Convention, and that their forces were advancing against the insurgents. To obviate its impression, Payan read aloud in the council-room the decree of the Convention, and inserted in it the names of all those of their party whom he observed in the gallery, hoping thereby to attach them from desperation to the cause of Robespierre. But an opposite effect immediately ensued, as they all instantly took to flight, leaving the gallery deserted. Nor did affairs wear a more promising aspect out of doors. There were about two thousand men stationed in the Place de Grève, with a powerful train of artillery. But their dispositions were already much shaken by the obvious defection of their fellow-citizens, when the light of the torches showed the heads of the columns of the National Guard appearing in all the avenues which led to the square. The moment was terrible; ten pieces of the artillery of the Convention were

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80.

Preparations
at the Hôtel
de Ville.

¹ Deux
Ams. xli.
404, 405.
Luc. xi. 114,
115, Mig. ii.
344. Toul.
iv. 399.

81.

The cannon-
iers desert
Robes-
pierre.

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1 Meda sur
le 9 Ther-
midor. Rév.
Mém. xlii.
383. Deux
Amls. xli.
4, 5. Th. vi.
482. Mig.
li. 344.
Hist. de la
Conv. xv.
193.

placed in battery, while the cannoniers of the municipality, with their lighted matches in their hands, stood beside their guns on the opposite side. But the authority of the law prevailed; the decree of the Legislature was read by torchlight, and the insurgent troops refused to resist it. Some emissaries of the Convention glided into the ranks of the municipality, and raised the cry, *Vive la Convention*: the insurgents were moved by the harangue of Meda, the commander of the national artillery, and in a short time the Place de Grève was deserted, and the whole cannoniers retired to their homes, or ranged themselves on the side of the Assembly.¹

82.
Arrest of
Robespierre
and all his
party.

Henriot descended the stair of the Hôtel de Ville; but seeing the square deserted, he vented his execrations on his faithless followers, who had for the most part abandoned the King in the same manner on the 10th August, and hastened back to his comrades. The conspirators, finding themselves unsupported, gave way to despair; the National Guard rushed rapidly up the stair, headed by Bourdon de l'Oise, with a pistol in each hand and a naked sabre in his teeth, and entered the room where Robespierre and the leaders of the revolt were assembled. Robespierre was sitting with his elbow on his knees, and his head resting on his hand; Meda discharged his pistol, which broke his under jaw, and he fell under the table. St Just implored Le Bas to put an end to his life. "Coward, follow my example!" said he, and blew out his brains. Couthon was seized under a table, feebly attempting to strike with a knife, which he wanted the courage to plunge in his heart; Coffinhal and the younger Robespierre threw themselves from the windows, and were seized in the inner court of the building. Henriot had been thrown from the window by Coffinhal; but, though bruised and mutilated, he contrived to crawl into the entrance of a sewer, from whence he was dragged out by the troops of the Convention.^{2*}

Robespierre and Couthon being supposed to be dead, were dragged by the heels to the Quai Pelletier, where it

¹ Lac. xi.
117. Mig.
li. 345. Th.
vi. 454, 455.
Meda, Rév.
Mém. xlii.
385. Levas-
seur, lii. 154.
Toul. iv.
390. Mém.
de Berryer,
i. 272.

* Many authors affirm that Robespierre shot himself. That he had a pistol in his hand is certain; but Levasseur de la Sarthe and Meda, the gendarmes who arrested him, agree in stating that his jaw was broken by a shot fired by the last of these parties.—See LEVASSEUR, lii. 154; MEDA, 385.

was proposed to throw them into the river ; but it being discovered, when day returned, that they still breathed, they were stretched on a board, and carried to the Convention between one and two o'clock in the morning. The members having refused to admit them, they were conveyed to the Committee of General Safety, where Robespierre lay for nine hours stretched on a table in the *salle d'audience*, with his broken jaw still bleeding, and suffering alike under bodily pain, and the execrations and insults of those around him. During the whole time that this cruel torture lasted, he evinced a stoical apathy. Foam merely issued from his mouth, which the humanity of some around him led them to wipe off ; but his finger was still with convulsive energy fixed on the holster of the pistol which he had not had the courage to discharge. His face retained its habitual bilious tint, but mingled with the ashen hue of death. At six in the morning a surgeon was sent for, who found the left jaw broken : he took out two or three teeth which were crushed by the shot, bandaged the jaw, and placed beside him a glass of water, with which he occasionally washed away the blood which filled his mouth. As he lay extended on the table, numbers reviled and spat upon him, and, to their eternal disgrace, some of his former colleagues in the committees insulted him, while the clerks of the office pricked him with their penknives.¹ At length he arose and sat down on a chair : he then gazed around him, fixing his eyes chiefly on the clerks in the office, whom he recognised. But he exhibited great impassibility, especially in the dressing of the wound, which occasioned acute pain. Shortly after, he was sent to the Conciergerie, where he was confined in the same cell which had been occupied by Danton, Hébert, and Chaumette. From thence he was brought, with all his associates, to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and as soon as the identity of their persons was established, they were condemned.² St Just and Dumas were taken direct to the Audience-Hall at the office of the Committee of Public Salvation, and

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83.

Dreadful
scene after
his seizure.

¹ Rapport, sur la Journée de 9 Thermidor, Pap inédits trouv. chez Rob. ii. 71, 73.

² Hist. de la Conv. iv. 203. Levas. iii. 155. Deux Amis, xii. 407. Hist. Parl. xxxiv. 92, 93. Riouffe, Mém. xxiii. 70. Mig. ii. 345. Méda, Rév. Mém. xiii. 286. Th. vi. 456. Lac. xi. 118, 119.

* "Ses collègues des comités vinrent l'insulter, le frapper, lui cracher au visage; des commis de bureau le piquèrent de leurs canifs."—*Derniers momens de Robespierre*; Hist. Parl. xxxiv. 94.

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84.
Executed
with St Just,
Henriot,
Couthon,
and all their
party.

thence to the same prison. The former gazed at the great picture of the Rights of Man placed there, and said, "It is I, nevertheless, who did that."

At four in the morning on the 29th July, all Paris was in motion to witness the death of the tyrant. He was placed on the chariot, between Henriot and Couthon, whose remains were as mutilated as his own, the last in the vehicle, in order that, with the usual barbarity of the period, which he himself had allowed, he should see all his friends perish before him. The multitude, which for long had ceased to attend the executions, manifested the utmost joy at their fate. He was conducted to the Place de la Révolution; the scaffold was placed on the spot where Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette had suffered. Never had such a crowd been witnessed on any former occasion; the streets, despite the earliness of the hour, were thronged to excess; every window was filled, even the roofs of the houses, like the manned yards of a ship, were crowded with spectators. The joy was universal; it almost approached to delirium. The blood from his jaw burst through the bandage, and overflowed his dress; his face was ghastly pale. He kept his eyes shut during the whole time the procession lasted, but could not close his ears against the imprecations of the multitude. A woman breaking from the crowd, exclaimed—"Murderer of all my kindred, your agony fills me with joy; descend to hell, covered with the curses of every mother in France!" Twenty of his comrades were executed before him; during the time they were suffering, he lay on the scaffold with his eyes shut, never uttering a word. When lifted up to be tied to the fatal plank, the executioner tore the bandage from his face; the lower jaw fell upon his breast, and he uttered a yell which filled every heart with horror. For some minutes the frightful figure was held up, fixed to the board, to the multitude; he was then placed under the axe, and the last sounds which reached his ears were the exulting shouts, which were prolonged for some minutes after his death.¹

Along with Robespierre, were executed Henriot, Couthon, St Just, Dumas, Coffinhal, Simon, and all the leaders of the revolt. St Just alone displayed the firmness which

¹ Deux
Année, xii.
408, 409.
Mig. h. 346.
Hist. de la
Conv. iv.
213. Toul.
iv. 301.
Th. vi. 467.
Lac. xi. 120.
Lavaiseur,
iii. 184, 187.

had so often been witnessed among the victims whom they had sent to the scaffold. Couthon wept with terror; the others died uttering blasphemies, which were drowned by the cheers of the people. The spectators shed tears for joy, they embraced each other in transport, they crowded round the scaffold to behold the bloody remains of the tyrants. "Yes, Robespierre, there is a God!" said a poor man as he approached the lifeless body of one so lately the object of dread; his fall was felt by all present as an immediate manifestation of the Divinity. Seventy-three of his party were executed next day, comprising all the leaders of the revolt at the municipality; but Barère, Billaud Varennes, and Collot d'Herbois, were in the ranks of the victorious party, and, though the worst of the whole, suffered at that time no punishment for their crimes. The whole theatres of Paris were open, as usual, during these scenes of horror, as they had been during the whole continuance of the *Reign of Terror*.¹*

Thus terminated the *Reign of Terror*—"the only series of crimes," says Sir James Mackintosh, "perhaps, in history, which, in spite of the common disposition to exaggerate extraordinary facts, has been beyond measure *underrated* in public opinion;" an epoch fraught with greater political instruction than any of equal duration which has existed since the beginning of the world. In no former period had the efforts of the people so completely triumphed, or the higher orders been so thoroughly crushed by the lower. The throne had been overturned, the altar destroyed, the aristocracy levelled with the dust; the

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85.

Transports of the public, and execution of the rest of his party.

¹ Lac. xi. 120. Th. vi. 457. *Moniteur*, Aug. 24, p. 1380.

86.

Reflections on the *Reign of Terror*, with the prodigious number of its victims.

* Theatres open on the 9th Thermidor, viz.:—

1. Opera. *Armide*, avec le ballet de *Télémaque*.
2. Opera Comique. *La Melomanie*.
3. Théâtre de la République. *La Conspiration pour la Liberté*.
4. Théâtre Feydeau. *Romeo et Juliette*.
5. Théâtre de l'Égalité, Section Marat. *Guillaume Tell*.
6. Théâtre de la Montagne. *Jardin de l'Égalité*.
7. Théâtre des Sans Culottes. *Cidevant Molière*.
8. Théâtre Lyrique des Amis de la Patrie. *Le Revoir*.
9. Théâtre Vaudeville. *Fête de l'Égalité*.
10. Théâtre de la Cité. *Le Combat de Thermopylæ*.
11. Théâtre du Lycée des Arts. *Jardin de l'Égalité*.
12. Amphithéâtre d'Astley, Faubourg du Temple. *La Fête Civique*.

Immediately before this is a list of forty-five persons executed the same day. It is the same throughout the whole of the *Reign of Terror*.—See *Moniteur*, 27th July 1794, (9 Thermidor.).

† MACKINTOSH'S Works, iii. 235.

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§ 24.

nobles were in exile, the clergy in captivity, the gentry in affliction. A merciless sword had waved over the state, destroying alike the dignity of rank, the splendour of talent, and the graces of beauty. All that excelled the labouring classes in situation, fortune, or acquirement, had been removed; they had triumphed over their oppressors, seized their possessions, and risen into their stations. And what was the consequence? The establishment of a more cruel and revolting tyranny than any which mankind had yet witnessed; the destruction of all the charities and enjoyments of life; the dreadful spectacle of streams of blood flowing through every part of France. With truth did the warmest apologists and ablest advocates of the Revolution now admit that it had produced "*the most indefatigable, searching, multiform, and omnipresent tyranny that ever existed*, which pervaded every class of society, which had ministers and victims in every village of France."* The earliest friends, the warmest advocates, the firmest supporters of the people, were swept off indiscriminately with their bitterest enemies; in the unequal struggle, virtue and philanthropy sank under ambition and violence, and society returned to a state of chaos, when all the elements of private or public happiness were scattered to the winds. Such are the results of unchaining the passions of the multitude; such the peril of suddenly admitting the light upon a benighted people.†

— "The will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left them at large to their own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes they might
Heap on themselves damnation, whilst they sought
Evil to others, and enraged might see
How all their malice served but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy shown
On man by them seduced; but on themselves
Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured."

Paradise Lost, l. 212.

The facility with which a faction, composed of a few

* Sir JAMES MACINTOSH. (Author of the *Vindicia Gallicæ*,) *Works*, iii. 263.

† The extent to which blood was shed in France during this melancholy period, will hardly be credited by future ages. The Republican Prudhomme, whose prepossessions led him to any thing rather than exaggeration of the horrors of the popular rule, has given the following appalling account of the victims of the Revolution. Its value will not be duly appreciated unless it is recollected that the author who compiled it was an ardent supporter of the Revolution—an intimate friend and political agent of Danton's; and that, in his well-known revolutionary journal, the "Révolu-

of the most audacious and reckless of the nation, triumphed over the immense majority of all the holders of property in the kingdom, and led them forth like victims to the sacrifice, is not the least extraordinary or memorable fact of that eventful period. The active part of the bloody faction at Paris never exceeded a few thousand men; their talents were by no means of the highest order, nor their weight in society considerable; yet they trampled

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87.

Ease with
which these
massacres
were per-
petrated.

tions de Paris," he had *justified* the massacres in the prisons in September 1792. See No., September 10, 1792.

CONVENTION NATIONALE.

		Morts.
Du 21 Septembre 1792 au 25 Octobre 1795, ou, ère republicaine, ann. 3.		
Individus guillotinés		18,613
Dont	{ Ci-devant nobles	1278
	{ Femmes, <i>idem</i>	750
	{ Religieuses	360
	{ Prêtres	1135
	{ Femmes d'artisans	1467
Individus périés dans la guerre intestine, suite de la journée du 31 Mai 1793 (à Lyon)		31,200
LYON.		
Morts de frayeur et par le famine pendant le siège		184
Périés par les démolitions		45
Femmes enceintes et en couche		348
Egorgés après la réaction du 9 Thermidor		145
Morts en prison		32
Suicides		45
Maisons démolies	1674.	
Total		709
MARSEILLE.		
Combat de Carteaux, en route pour Marseille		650
Morts en prison		79
Total		729
TOULON.		
Pendant le siège		9000
Egorgés ou noyés à la suite des Anglais		3100
Morts en prison		160
Fusillés		800
Femmes et enfans tombés à la mer		1265
Total		14,325
BENOÎT.		
Destruction et dispersion des habitans de cette ville, dont le nombre des maisons se porte à plus de		1600
MIDI.		
Individus égorgés dans tout le Midi, après la réaction du 9 Thermidor		750
Conspirations		360
Insurrections		140

GUERRE DE LA VENDEE.

En rapprochant les massacres, égorgemens, fusillades, noyades, et les morts dans les différens combats, entre Français, la perte s'évalue à peu près au nombre de (individus)

908,000

Carry forward,

908,916

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under foot all the influential classes, ruled mighty armies with absolute sway, kept two hundred thousand of their fellow-citizens in captivity, and daily led out several hundred, and at last perhaps, taking the whole country together, some thousand persons, of the best blood in France, to execution. Such is the effect of the unity of action which atrocious wickedness produces; such the consequence of rousing the cupidity of the lower orders; such the ascendancy which, in periods of anarchy, is acquired by the most savage and lawless of the people. The peaceable and inoffensive citizen lived and wept in silence; terror crushed every attempt at combination;

		Brought over,	Morts.
Dont	{ Femmes	15,000	966,916
	{ Enfants	22,000	
Cette guerre a fait disparaître, soit villages, hameaux, méfaires, ou fermes, plus de		20,000	
VICTIMES sous le proconsulat de CARRIER, à Nantes			32,000
	Enfans fusillés	500	
	Idem, noyés	1500	
	Femmes fusillées	264	
	Idem, noyées	500	
	Prêtres fusillés	300	
Dont	Idem, noyés	460	
	Nobles, idem	1400	
	Artisans, idem	5300	
	Individus morts en prison par la peste	8000	
<i>Nota.</i> —Les individus guillotinés à Lyon, Marseille, Toulon, et Bédoin, se trouvent compris dans la masse ci-dessus, de 18,613 Individus qui se sont suicidés, pendus, noyés, ou jetés par les fenêtres, par suite de la terreur 4790 Femmes mortes par suite de couches prématurées 3400 Morts par la famine 20,000 Individus devenus fous par la Révolution, 1550			
		En Tout	1,027,106

Frudhomme,
 Vict. de la Rev.
 Vol. vi. Table
 N. 622.

In this enumeration are not comprehended the massacres at Versailles, at the Abbaye, the Carmes, or other prisons, on September 2d. the victims of the Glacière of Avignon, those shot at Toulon and Marseilles, or the persons slain in the little town of Bédoin, of which the whole population perished. Those contained in the "Liste des Condamnés," a very curious work, down to the 12th Thermidor, (30th July 1794.) are 2741. See *Supplément à No. IX. Liste des Condamnés*, p. 15.—The additional 99 contained in the *Moniteur*, are those condemned and executed after the fall of Robespierre, and are also in the *Liste des Condamnés*, Nos. X. and XI.

It is in an especial manner remarkable in this dismal catalogue, how large a proportion of the victims of the Revolution were persons in the middle and lower ranks of life. The priests and nobles guillotined are only 2413, while the persons of plebeian origin exceed 13,000! The nobles and priests put to death at Nantes were only 2160; while the infants drowned and shot are 2000, the women 764, and the artisans 5300! So rapidly in revolutionary convulsions does the career of cruelty reach the lower orders, and so wide spread is the carnage dealt out to them, compared with that which they have sought to inflict on their superiors.

the extremity of grief subdued even the firmest hearts. "Isque habitus animorum fuit, ut pessimum facinûs auderent pauci, plures vellent, omnes paterentur."* In despair at effecting any alleviation of the general sufferings, apathy universally prevailed, the people sought to forget their sorrows in the delirium of present enjoyments, and the theatres were never fuller than during the whole duration of the Reign of Terror. Ignorance of human nature can alone lead us to ascribe this to any peculiarity in the French character; the same effects have been observed in all parts and ages of the world, as invariably attending a state of extreme and long-continued distress.¹

How, then, did a faction, whose leaders were so extremely contemptible in point of numbers, obtain the power to rule France with such absolute sway? The answer is simple. It was by an expedient of the plainest kind, and by steadily following out one principle, so obvious that few have sought for the cause of such terrible phenomena in its application. This was by promoting, and to a great extent actually giving, to the working-classes the influence and the possessions of all the other orders in the state. *Egestas cupida novarum rerum*,† was the maxim on which they acted; it was to this point, the cupidity and ambition of those to whom fortune had proved adverse, that all their measures were directed. Their principle was to keep the revolutionary passions of the people constantly awake by the display of fresh objects of desire; to represent all the present misery which the system of innovation had occasioned, as the consequence of the resistance which the holders of property had opposed to its progress; and to dazzle the populace by the prospect of boundless felicity, when the revolutionary equality and spoliation for which they contended was fully established. By this means they effectually secured, over the greater part of France, the co-operation of the multitude; and it was by their physical strength, guided and called forth by the revolutionary clubs and committees universally established, and every where composed of the most ardent

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1 Louvet,
124, 125.
Mercier,
Tableau de
Paris, and
Monneur,
throughout

88.
Principle
which led to
the triumph
of the Revo-
lution.

* "And this was the state of men's minds, that extreme wickedness was dared by a few, wished by many, endured by all."—TACITUS, *Hist.* i. 23.

† "Indigence covetous of change."

CHAP. of the Jacobin faction, that the extraordinary power of the
XV. Terrorists was upheld.

1794.

89.

What long
supported.
and at length
terminated,
this dreadful
power.

In the later stages of the Revolution, this universally aroused cupidity of the working-classes was powerfully supported, and the strength of Jacobin vigour increased, by the terrors of punishment among the leaders of the populace for the innumerable crimes they had committed. This terror went to such a length as to be often ridiculous : for a few words from a handful of children or old women were often sufficient to make the leaders tremble who had defeated the armies of all Europe. This would be inexplicable did we not know that "conscience makes cowards of us all." These terrors and this system succeeded perfectly as long as the victims of spoliation were the higher orders and considerable holders of property ; it was when they were exhausted, and the edge of the guillotine began to descend upon the shopkeepers and the more opulent of the labouring classes, that the *general* reaction took place which overturned the Reign of Terror. When society is in so corrupt and profligate a form, that a faction, qualified by their talents and energy to take the lead in public affairs, can be found who will carry on the government on these principles, and they are not crushed in the outset by a united effort of all the holders of property, it can hardly fail of obtaining temporary success. It is well that the friends of order of every political persuasion—and they are to be found as much among the supporters of rational freedom as the advocates of monarchical power—should be aware of the deadly weapon which is in the possession of their adversaries, and the necessity of uniting to wrest it from their hands the moment that it is unsheathed. And it would be fortunate if the agents of revolution would contemplate, in the Reign of Terror and the fate of Robespierre, the inevitable effects of using it to their country and themselves.

In contemplating the progress of the Revolution, nothing appears more extraordinary than the universal and rapid destruction which it brought upon all ranks who aided it, from the throne to the cottage. The king supported it and perished ; the nobles supported it and perished ; the clergy supported it and perished ; the merchants supported it and

perished ; the public creditors supported it and perished ; the shopkeepers supported it and perished ; the artisans supported it and perished ; the peasants supported it and perished. The nobles, whose passion for innovation and misguided declamations in favour of equality, had first led to the convocation of the States-General, who early set the example of submission to the popular will, and voluntarily abdicated their titles, their privileges, and their rights, to place themselves at the head of the movement, were the first to be destroyed. Decimated by the guillotine, exiles from their country, destitute wanderers in foreign lands, they beheld their estates confiscated, their palaces sold, their children proscribed, themselves undone. While by the waters of Babylon they sat down and wept, they learned to lament the fatal precipitance with which they had excited the ambition of their inferiors, by yielding so precipitately to the public frenzy in favour of democracy.

The clergy, who had proved themselves the earliest and steadiest friends of freedom, whose junction with the Tiers Etat in the hour of peril had first given the latter a superiority over the privileged classes, and compelled the ruinous union of all the orders in one chamber, were utterly destroyed by the party whom they had cherished. Their religion was abolished, their churches closed, their property confiscated, themselves subjected to cruel and tyrannical enactments, compelled to wander in utter destitution in foreign lands, or purchase a miserable pittance by violating their oaths, and earning the contempt of all the faithful among their flocks. The commercial classes, whose jealousy of the unjust privileges of the noblesse had first fostered the flame of liberty, were consumed in the conflagration which it had raised ; the once flourishing colonies of the monarchy were in flames, its manufacturing cities in ruins, its private wealth destroyed, its sails banished from the ocean, its naval establishments in decay. Blasted by a ruinous system of paper currency, and crushed in the grasp of a relentless despotism, manufacturing industry was withered, and commercial capital annihilated. The public creditors, once so loud in their praises of the first movements of the Revolution, whose enthusiasm had raised the public funds thirty

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90.
Universal
destruction
by the Revolution of all
its supporters.

91.
Of the clergy
and commercial
classes.

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per cent in one day, when Necker was restored to power, in 1788, on the shoulders of the democracy, were now crushed beneath its wheels; the once opulent capitalists, ruined by the fall of the public securities, deprived of their property by a fictitious paper, paid by their debtors in a nominal currency, had long since sunk to the dust; while the miserable *rentiers*, cheated out of almost all their income by the payment of their annuities in assignats, were wandering about in utter despair, supporting a miserable existence by charity, or terminating it by suicide.

92.
Of the
middle and
working
classes.

The shopkeepers, whose unanimous shouts had so long supported the Constituent Assembly, whose bayonets had first upheld the fortunes of the Revolution, at last tasted its bitter fruits. As its movement advanced, and they became the objects of jealousy to still lower ambition, the fury of plebeian revenge was directed against their ranks; insensibly they melted away under the axe of the guillotine, or were destroyed by the law of the *maximum*, and lamented with unavailing tears the convulsions which had deprived them at once of the purchasers of their commodities, the security for their property, and the disposal of their industry. The artisans, who had expected a flood of prosperity from the regeneration of society, whose pikes had so often, at Jacobin command, issued from the Faubourgs to overawe the legislature, were speedily steeped in misery from the consequences of their actions. Impatient of restraint, unable to endure a superior, they were at last subjected to the most galling bondage. Destitute of employment, fed only by the bounty of government, they were fettered in every action of their lives. Debarred the power of purchasing even the necessities of life for themselves, they were forced first to wait half the day as needy suppliants at the offices of the committees who issued their tickets, and then to watch half the night round the bakers' shops, to procure the wretched pittance of a pound of black bread a-day for each member of their families. The peasants expected an immediate deliverance from tithes, taxes, and burdens of every description, as the consequence of their emancipation; and they found themselves ground down by the law of the *maximum*, forced to

sell at nominal prices to the purveyors for the armies, and fettered in every action of their lives by oppressive regulations. They saw their sons perish in the field, or rot in the hospitals, their horses and cattle seized for the forced requisitions, and the produce of their labour torn from them by battalions of armed men, to maintain an indigent and worthless rabble in the great cities of the Republic.

Consequences so extraordinary, so unlooked for to every class of society from the throne to the cottage, are singularly instructive as to the consequences of revolutions; but yet, if the matter be considered dispassionately, it is evident that they must in every age attend any considerable convulsion in society. When a tree is felled, it is the leaves and the extremities which first begin to wither, because they are soonest affected by a stoppage in the supplies by which the whole is nourished. It is the same with society. Upon the occurrence of a revolution, the working-classes are the first to suffer, because they have no stock to maintain themselves during a period of adversity, and being wholly dependent on the daily wages of labour, are the earliest victims of the catastrophe which has interrupted it. It is this immediate effect of a revolution, in spreading misery through the labouring poor, which in the general case renders its march irresistible, when not arrested in the outset by a firm combination of all the holders of property, and precipitates society into a series of convulsions, from which it can hardly emerge without the destruction of the existing generation. The shock given to credit, the stoppage to speculation, the contraction to expenditure, is so excessive, that the lower orders are immediately involved in distress; and the same causes which increase their discontent, and augment their disposition to revolt, disable government, by the rapid fall of the revenue, either from administering relief or exerting force. The consequence is, that fresh insurrections take place; more extravagant and levelling doctrines become popular; a lower but more energetic class rises to the head of affairs; desperate measures of finance are adopted, the public expenditure is increased, while the national income is diminished; and, after a succession of vain attempts to avoid the catastrophe, national bankruptcy takes place, and the accumulations of ages are swept off in

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1794.

93.

All this necessarily results from the development of the revolutionary passion.

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94.
Successive
steps of its
disastrous
progress.

a general public and private insolvency. "*Nemo unquam imperium flagitio quæsitum bonis artibus exercuit.*"*

The different steps of this disastrous but unavoidable progress are clearly marked in the successive stages of the French Revolution. Within six months after the Revolution broke out, it was discovered that the revenue had fallen, in consequence of the general uncertainty of the future, from £24,000,000 a-year to £17,000,000, and that at the very time when the embarrassment of the finances had been the principal cause of the convocation of the States-General. No resource could be found to meet the pressing difficulties of the Exchequer, but the confiscation of the property of the church, and subsequently that of the emigrant nobles. These measures again engendered evils which tended to perpetuate the difficulties from which they sprang. The confiscation of the church property rendered necessary the laws against the refractory priests, and thereby lighted the flames of civil war in La Vendée; while the severe enactments against the emigrant nobles produced a war of life and death with the aristocratic monarchs in Europe. Pressed by civil war within, and by the forces of Europe without, the Convention found themselves compelled to have recourse to the system of assignats, and carried on the enormous expenditure of a hundred and seventy millions sterling a-year, by dispensing with a prodigal hand the confiscated wealth of more than half of France. This prodigious issue of paper necessarily led to its rapid depreciation; all obligations of debt and credit were overturned by the necessity of accepting payment in a nominal currency; the rapid rise in the price of provisions compelled the government to adopt a *maximum*, and interfere with the arm of force in the management of public subsistence. Thence the forced requisitions, the compulsory sales, the distribution of rations, and all the innumerable tyrannical regulations which fettered industry in every department; and at length, by exciting the passions of the people against each other, brought down even to the humblest class the horrors which they had originally inflicted on their superiors.

Such a survey of the consequences of human violence,

* "No one ever applied power acquired by wickedness to good purposes."
—TACITUS.

both vindicates the justice of Providence, by demonstrating how rapidly and unavoidably the guilt of every class in society brings upon itself its own punishment, and tends to make us judge charitably of the conduct of men placed in such a terrible crisis of society. Harshly as we may think of the atrocities of the Revolution, let no man be sure, that, placed in similar circumstances, he would not have been betrayed into the same excesses. It is the insensible gradation in violence, the experienced necessity of advancing with the tide, which renders such convulsions so perilous to the morals as well as the welfare of nations. The authors of many of the worst measures in the Revolution, were restored to private life as innocent and inoffensive as other men; the most atrocious violations of right had been so long foreseen and discussed, that their occurrence produced little or no sensation. "Of all the lessons derived from the history of human passion," says Lavalette, "the most important is the utter impossibility which the best men will always experience of stopping, if they are once led into the path of error. If, a few years before they were perpetrated, the crimes of the Revolution could have been portrayed to those who afterwards committed them, even Robespierre himself would have recoiled with horror. Men are seduced, in the first instance, by plausible theories; their heated imaginations represent them as beneficial, and easy of execution; they advance unconsciously from errors to faults, and from faults to crimes, till sensibility is destroyed by the spectacle of guilt, and the most savage atrocities are dignified by the name of state policy."¹ Such always will be the case; it is the pressure of external circumstances which ultimately produces guilt, as much as guilt which at first induces the difficulties of public affairs. The leaders of a revolution are constantly advancing before the fire which they themselves have lighted; the moment they stop, they are consumed in the flames.

One circumstance is manifest from the whole history of the Revolution, upon which it well becomes the people of this country to ponder if they shall find themselves involved in a similar convulsion; that is, that by far the greatest and most atrocious crimes committed in its progress were perpetrated by *jurymen*. The whole victims of

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XV.

1794.

95.

Manner in which the public mind is corrupted during a Revolution.

¹ Lavalette, l. 178.

96.

Inefficacy of juries as a check on Revolutionary crimes.

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1794.

the revolutionary tribunals at Paris, 2800 in number, were judicially murdered by the *verdicts of juries*. The same was the case with almost all the other revolutionary tribunals in France. In England all the atrocities of Jefferies, which had so powerful an effect in bringing about the Revolution of 1688, were effected by means of juries. The monarchical cruelties which occasioned the English, the democratic atrocities which disgraced the French Revolution, found equally ready instruments in the passions or pliability of jurymen.* This fact is not a little remarkable. It demonstrates how extremely fallacious is the reliance which is generally placed on that institution, as the bulwark of freedom and the shield of oppressed innocence. That it has often proved so in former times, when power was wielded by monarchs or aristocratic bodies, and juries were taken from the lower, is certain. But what ensues when the lower orders themselves are the oppressors, and the sword of power is wielded by those whom they have placed in the seats of justice? Will they permit the accused aristocrats to be tried by their peers, as was the case with themselves when the nobles were in power? Unquestionably they will not; the first thing they invariably do, is to place the most violent of their own class and faction upon the lists of jurymen. Juries then become what Tocqueville says they are in America, nothing better than the judicial committee of the majority. Actuated by its passions, inflamed by its fears, envenomed by its jealousies, they are then more dangerous to real liberty, and perpetrate injustice on a greater scale, than permanent judges ever could venture to do; for, in their case, numbers remove responsibility without lessening cruelty, and obscurity shelters crime without fostering virtue. In democratic times the deepest wounds to the cause of freedom will in general be inflicted by the hands of jurymen.

Robespierre was to the internal march of the Revolution what Napoleon was to its external passions. Both rose to eminence, and were sustained in power by surrendering themselves to the all-powerful current of public passion,

* All the acts of Jefferies were done with the aid of juries, and without the censure of Parliament. They afford a fatal proof that judicial forms and constitutional establishments may be rendered unavailing by the subserviency or prejudice of those who are appointed to carry them into effect. —SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH'S *Works*, ii. 41.

and directing it to the objects which the ambition of the great bulk of men at the time most ardently desired. Both owed the long continuance of their power to the opinion generally and deservedly entertained, that they were sincere in their enthusiasm, disinterested in their intentions, and invincible in their hearts. The dreadful catastrophes to which the rule of both led, are to be regarded as the result, not so much of their individual crimes, as of the false, and, in their ultimate consequences, terrible principles on which they proceeded. The maxim of Robespierre and St Just, that what constituted a republic was the destruction of every thing that opposed it, was precisely the principle which led Napoleon to his insatiable foreign conquests. Invincible necessity urged both on when they had launched on the career of crime ; and that necessity was, the moral law of nature which dooms outrageous sin to punishment from the consequences of the very acts which itself most ardently desires. The 9th Thermidor was the counterpart of the Moscow retreat. Instead, then, of regarding Robespierre as a mere individual man, and ascribing the horrors of his career to his wicked propensities, it is more consonant to historic justice, as well as the cause of virtue, to represent him as the INCARNATION IN CIVIL GOVERNMENT OF THE REVOLUTION. And probably no Avatar sent on such a mission could be imbued with fewer vices.

Extravagant as the opinions of Robespierre now appear, and dreadful as were the consequences to which they led, there seems no reason to doubt that they were seriously entertained by him, and that, throughout his bloody career, he was actuated in the main by the desire of promoting human felicity. Individual ambition, jealousy of rivals, envy of superiors, may have co-operated in prompting his actions ; but as his language was uniformly philanthropic, so his private disinterestedness never betrayed the influence of corrupt mercenary motives. It was the total disregard of the means employed, the fatal error of supposing that the great body of mankind are innocent, and that the prevailing evils of society were all owing to the vices of a few, that was the cause of all the unspeakable misery he brought upon mankind. He was a stern and relentless fanatic of the school of Rousseau. He constantly hoped, that when he had destroyed the whole superior classes of society,

CHAP.

XV.

1794.

97.

Robespierre was the incarnation of the Revolution in internal government.

98.

Fundamental errors of Robespierre's principles.

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XV.
1794.

general virtue would rise up on the foundation of restored equality; he always expected to see the stream of human iniquity run out :—

" Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis; at ille
Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum."

Instead of this, he found to his unspeakable horror, that the republican authorities, whom his principles had created, were infinitely more corrupt and oppressive than the aristocratic or monarchical had been; and he adventured on the attempt to destroy the unparalleled mass of iniquity which had risen to the direction of affairs under his own system of universal suffrage, and was crushed by its weight. Robespierre's career was thus not the offspring of any individual character: it was the result of the delusion of the age, and affords a *reductio ad absurdum* of its errors. And that delusion was the belief of the natural innocence of man: those errors, that it was lawful to do evil that good might come of it.

99.
Real cause of
the atrocities
of the
Revolution.

It is altogether a delusion, therefore, to represent the atrocities of the Revolution as the work merely of the guilty men who were at its head. It is evident, from every page of its annals, that these men rose to eminence only because they were the representatives of its spirit, and resolutely determined to do its work. Equally with Napoleon during his career of foreign conquest, Robespierre always marched with the opinions of five millions of men. It was the force of guilty passion, the thirst for illicit gratification, the passion for general destruction, which raised up his infernal army of satellites in the first case, as it was the desire of plunder, the thirst for elevation, the passion for glory, in the last. Robespierre never had any guards; he had no private fortune, and made none in the Revolution; he died as poor as he lived. What, then, was the secret of his astonishing power? Nothing but the uniform and ardent support of the people, who justly regarded him as thoroughly identified with their supposed interests, and heart and soul actuated by their real passions. The Jacobin club composed his janissaries, the Revolutionary committees his regular forces. But these janissaries and these forces were themselves unarmed; their influence was entirely a moral one: they governed the armed force of the National Guard, because

they partook of its passions, and were identified with its objects. The whole standing army of France was congregated on the frontier during the Reign of Terror; fifteen hundred thousand national guards were in arms in the interior; when a few battalions of them at Paris spoke out, the tyranny was at end. Three thousand men in the Place de Grève overthrew and made prisoner the tyrant. The crimes of the Revolution, therefore, were not the work of any particular body of men; they were the work of the masses, and the guilt of them must be borne by the immense majority of the French nation. Their real cause is to be found in the overthrow of religion which Voltaire effected, the dreams of equality which Rousseau introduced.

There is no character, however, which has not some redeeming points: pure unmixed wickedness is the creation of romance, but never yet appeared in real life.* Even the Jacobins of Paris were not destitute of good qualities; history would deviate equally from its first duty, and its chief usefulness, if it did not bring them prominently forward. With the exception of some atrocious characters, such as Collot d'Herbois, Fouché, Carrier, and a few others, who were villains as base as they were inhuman, almost entirely guided by selfish motives, they were, for the most part, men possessed of some qualities in which the seeds of a noble character are to be found. In moral courage, energy of character, and decision of conduct, they yielded to none in ancient or modern times: their heroic resolution to maintain, amidst unexampled perils, the independence of their country, was worthy of the best days of Roman patriotism. They possessed in the highest degree the quality so finely described by the poet:—

101.
Elevated
points of the
character of
the Jacobins.

* At the trial of Burke in Edinburgh, on December 24, 1828, a remarkable instance of this occurred. He was indicted for three cold-blooded murders, perpetrated on unsuspecting victims, whom he lured into his den, to sell their bodies. Subsequently, it was ascertained he had murdered sixteen in this way. Yet this monster, who was tried along with a young woman, his associate, with whom he lived, no sooner heard the verdict of the jury, which found him guilty and acquitted her, than he threw his arms around her neck and kissed her, saying—"Thank God! Mary, you are saved." It occurred to the author at the moment, who conducted the prosecution on the part of the crown—"How many are there among his judges, jury, or accusers, who, in similar circumstances, would have done the same?"

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"The unconquerable will
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
With courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome."

If this strenuous will could be separated from the obvious necessity of repelling the Allies to avoid punishment for the numberless crimes which they had committed, it would be deserving of the highest admiration: mingled, as it necessarily was in their case, with a large portion of that baser alloy, it is still a redeeming point in their character. Some of them, doubtless, were selfish or rapacious, and used their power for the purposes of individual lust or private emolument. But others, among whom we must number Robespierre and St Just, were entirely free from this degrading contamination, and in the atrocities they committed, were governed, if not by public principle, at least by private ambition. Even the blood which they shed was often the result, in their estimation, not so much of terror or danger as of overbearing necessity. They deemed it essential to the success of freedom; and regarded the victims who perished under the guillotine, as the melancholy sacrifice which required to be laid on its altars.

102.
Similarity of
the revolu-
tionary to
religious
fanaticism.

In arriving at this frightful conclusion, they were, doubtless, mainly influenced by the perils of their own situation: they massacred others because they were conscious that death, if vanquished, justly awaited themselves. But still the weakness of humanity in their, as in many similar cases, deluded them by the magic of words, or the supposed influence of purer motives, and led them to commit the greatest crimes, while constantly professing, and often feeling, the noblest intentions. There is nothing surprising or incredible in this: we have only to recollect, that all France joined in a crusade against the Albigeois, and that its bravest warriors deemed themselves secure from eternal, by consigning thousands of wretches to temporal flames: we have only to go back in imagination to Godfrey of Bouillon and the Christian warriors putting forty thousand unresisting citizens to death on the storming of Jerusalem, and wading to the Holy Sepulchre ankle-deep in human gore, to be convinced that such delusions are not peculiar to any particular age or country, but that they are the universal offspring of fanaticism, whether in political or religious contests. The writers who represent

the Jacobins as mere bloodthirsty wretches, vultures insatiate in their passion for destruction, are well-meaning and amiable, but weak and ignorant men; unacquainted with the real working of delusion or wickedness in the human heart, and calculated to mislead, rather than direct, future ages on the approach of times similar to that in which they obtain their ascendancy. Vice never appears in such colours: it invariably conceals its real deformity. It is by borrowing the language and assuming the garb of virtue, that its greatest triumphs are gained. It is the "deceitfulness of sin" which constitutes its greatest danger; its worst excesses ever attest the truth of Rochefoucault's maxim, that "hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue." If other states are ever to be ruled by a Jacobin faction, the advent of their power will not be marked by sanguinary professions, or the hideous display of heartless atrocity. It will be ushered in by the warmest expressions of philanthropy, by boundless hopes of felicity, and professions of the utmost regard for the great principles of public justice and general happiness.¹*

¹ Levasseur
de la Sarthe,
i. 24, 80, iii.
164, 226.

There is no opinion more frequently stated by the annalists and historians of the Revolution on the popular side in France, than that the march of the Revolution was inevitable; that an invincible fatality attends all such convulsions; and that by no human exertions could its progress have been changed, or its horrors averted.† The able works of Thiers, Mignet, and many others, are mainly directed to this end; and it constitutes, in their

103.
Great error
of the revo-
lutionary
historians
on this sub-
ject.

* The ablest and most interesting apology for the Jacobins is to be found in the Memoirs of Levasseur de la Sarthe, himself no inconsiderable actor in their sanguinary deeds. It is highly satisfactory to have such a work to do justice to their intentions; and it is a favourable symptom of the love of impartiality in the human heart, that even Robespierre and St Just have had their defenders.

Whatever opinions may be entertained on this point, one thing seems very clear, that Robespierre's abilities were of the highest order, and that the contrary opinions expressed by so many of his contemporaries, were suggested by envy or horror. It is impossible in any other way to account for his long dominion over France, at a period when talent of every sort was hurled forth in wild confusion to the great central arena at Paris. His speeches are a sufficient indication of the vigour of his mind; they are distinguished in many instances by a nervous eloquence, a fearless energy, a simple and manly cast of thought, very different from most of the frothy declamations at the tribune.

† This doctrine is the one put by Cornelle into the mouth of Theseus:—

"L'âme est donc esclave; une loi souveraine
Vers le bien ou le mal inécessamment l'entraîne;
Et nous ne recevons ni crainte ni desir
De cette liberté qui n'a rien à choisir.

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1794.

estimation, the best apology for the Revolution. Never was an opinion more erroneous. There is nothing in the annals of human affairs which warrants the conclusion, that improvement necessarily leads to revolution; and that in revolution, a succession of rulers, each more sanguinary and atrocious than the preceding, must be endured before the order of society is restored. It is not the career of reform, it is the career of *guilt*, which leads to these consequences; this deplorable succession took place in France, not because changes were made, but because boundless crimes in the course of these changes were committed. The partisans of liberal institutions have fallen into a capital error, when, in their anxiety to exculpate the actors in the Revolution, they have laid its horrors on the cause of the Revolution itself: to do so, was to brand the cause of freedom with infamy, when it should have been confined to its wicked supporters. It was the early commission of crime by the leaders of the movement which precipitated and rendered irretrievable its subsequent scenes; the career of passion in nations is precisely similar to its excesses in individuals, and subject to the same moral laws. If we would seek the key to the frightful aberrations of the Revolution, we have only to turn to the exposition, by the great English divines, of the progress of guilty passions in the individual. The description of the one might pass for a faithful portrait of the other.* There is a necessity to which both are subjected: but it is not a blind fatality or a necessary connexion between change and convulsion. It is the moral

Attachez sans relache à cet ordre sublime,
Vertueux sans merite et vicieux sans crime,
Qu'on massacre les rois, qu'on brise les autels,
C'est la faute des dieux, et non pas des mortels."

Edipe, Act iii. scene 6.

* Take, for example, the following passage from Archbishop Tillotson:—"All vice stands upon a precipice; to engage in any sinful course is to run down the hill. If we once let loose the propensities of our nature, we cannot gather in the reins and govern them as we please; it is much easier not to begin a bad course, than to stop it when begun. 'Tis a good thing for a man to think to set bounds to himself in any thing that is bad; to resolve to sin in number, weight, and measure, with great temperance and discretion; that he will commit this sin, and then give over; to entertain but this one temptation, and after that shut the door, and admit no more. Our corrupt hearts, when they are once set in motion, are like the raging sea, to which we can set no bounds, nor say to it, Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further. Sin is very cunning and deceitful, and does strangely gain upon men when once they give way to it. It is of a very bewitching nature, and hath strange arts of address and insinuation. The

law of nature, that vice, whether in nations or private men, when the proffered opportunities of repentance have been neglected, is made to work out its deserved punishment in the efforts which it makes for its own gratification.

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1794.

"For they shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incens'd Deity while offer'd grace
Invites; for I will clear their senses dark
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due
This my long sufferance and day of grace,
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste,
But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on and deeper fall;
And none but such from mercy I exclude." •

The death of Hébert and the Anarchists was that of guilty depravity; that of Robespierre and the Decemvirs, of sanguinary fanaticism; that of Danton and his confederates, of stoical infidelity; that of Madame Roland and the Girondists, of reckless ambition and deluded virtue; that of Louis and his family, of religious forgiveness. The moralist will contrast the different effects of virtue and wickedness in the last moments of life; the Christian will mark with thankfulness the superiority in the supreme hour, to the sublimest efforts of human virtue, which was evinced by the believers in his own faith. It is this superiority which provides a remedy for the injustice which has occasioned it. Posterity invariably declares for the cause of virtue; for it has ceased to have any interest to support that of vice. The march of democracy, though not prevented by the wisdom of man, is speedily stopped by the law of nature. The people in the end learn from their own suffering, if they will not from the experience of others, that the gift of unbounded

104.
Provision
for the cor-
rection of
these exces-
sive evils.

giving way to a small sin does marvellously prepare and dispose a man for a greater. By giving way to one little vice after another, the strongest resolution may be broken. 'Tis scarce imaginable of what force a single bad action is to produce more; for sin is very teeming and fruitful, and though there be no blessing annexed to it, yet it does strangely increase and multiply. As there is a connexion of one virtue with another, so vices are linked together, and one sin draws many after it. When the devil tempts a man to commit any wickedness, he does, as it were, lay a long train of sins; and if the first temptation take, they give fire to another. Let us then resist the beginning of sin: because we have then most power and sin least."—TILLOTSON, *Serm. x. Works*, i. 91, fol. ed.—This might stand for a graphic picture of the downward progress of the revolutionary passion in nations; philosophy will strive in vain to give so clear an elucidation of the causes which render it, when once thoroughly awakened, so destructive in its career.

• *Paradise Lost*, iii. 165.

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political power is fatal to those who receive it; that despotism may originate in the workshop of the artisan as well as the palace of the sovereign; and that those who, yielding to the wiles of the tempter, eat of the forbidden fruit, must be driven from the joys of Paradise, to wander amid the suffering of a guilty world. Genius, long a stranger to the cause of order, resumes her place by its side; she gives to a suffering, what she refused to a ruling power. The indignation of virtue, the satire of talent, is wreaked on the panders to popular gratification; the sycophancy of journals, the baseness of the press, the tyranny of the mob, employs the pencil of the Tacitus who portrays the decline and fall of such convulsions. It is this reaction of Genius against Violence, of Virtue against Vice, which steadies the march of human events, and renders the miseries of one age the source of elevation and instruction to those which are to succeed it. Whatever may be the temporary ascendancy of violence or anarchy, there can be but one opinion as to the final tendency of the laws of nature. We can discern the rainbow of peace, though not ourselves destined to reach the ark of salvation; and look forward with confidence to the future improvement of the species, from amidst the storm which is to subvert the monarchies of Europe.

CHAPTER XVI.

CAMPAIGN OF 1794.

"THE war," says Jomini, "so rashly provoked by the declamations of the Girondists, was hardly commenced in good earnest, when it became evident that all the established relations and balance of power in Europe were to be dissolved in the struggle. France and England had not yet joined in mortal conflict, and yet it was easy to foresee that the one was destined to become irresistible at land, and the other to acquire the dominion of the seas."¹ It was not the mere energy of the Revolution, nor the closing of all other avenues of employment, which produced the fearful military power of France. These causes, while they alone were in operation, proved totally insufficient to withstand the shock of the disciplined armies of Germany. It was the subsequent despotism of the Committee of Public Salvation which consolidated the otherwise discordant materials of the Revolution, and which, by superinducing the terror of authority on the fervour of freedom, really produced this effect. The mere strength of enthusiastic feeling, even when exerted in the noblest of causes, that of national defence, can never produce those steady and persevering efforts which are requisite for durable success. It is power and force which can alone mould the fervent elements into a lasting form. Liberty without discipline would have perished in licentiousness; discipline without spirit would have proved inadequate to the struggle. It was the combination of the two which became so fatal to the European monarchies, and, by turning all the energies of France into

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1.

Military strength of France in consequence of the Revolution.

¹Jom. v. 3.

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2.
And naval
weakness.

one regulated channel, converted the Reign of Terror into the School of Conquest.

But while these changes were in progress on the continent of Europe, a very different fate awaited the naval armaments of France. Power at sea, unlike victory at land, cannot spring from mere suffering, or from the energy of destitute warriors turned out with arms in their hands to plunder and oppress mankind. Fleets require nautical skill, commercial wealth, and extensive credit: centuries of pacific exertion, habits acquired during many successive generations, are essential to greatness on that element. The general meets with resources of all kinds in the countries into which he turns his troops; the admiral finds nothing to support him in the sterile waste of the ocean: and before he can even put to sea and brave the fury of the waves, he must have laid in extensive stores, and constructed and equipped his vessels at an enormous expense. Without an accumulation of capital, and the gradual formation of a nursery of seamen, it is in vain to contend with an established power on the waves. The destruction of the capital and commerce of France during the fury of the Revolution, while it augmented, by the misery it produced, the military, destroyed, by the penury it occasioned, the naval resources of the Republic. Before the English fleets had issued from their harbours, the flag of France had almost disappeared from the seas; commercial wealth, private enterprise were extinguished; and the sanguinary government found that victories were not to be acquired at sea like conquest by land, by merely forcing column after column of conscripts on board their vessels.¹

¹ Jom. v. 4.
Th. vi. 271.

3.
Respective
navies of the
two powers.

The consequence was, that from the very first the naval superiority of England became apparent. France, at the commencement of the war, had eighty-two ships of the line, and seventy-seven frigates; but the officers, chiefly drawn from the aristocratic classes, had in great part emigrated at the commencement of the Revolution; and those of an inferior order who supplied their place, were deficient both in the education and experience requisite for the naval service. On the other hand, England had one hundred and twenty-nine ships of the line fit for sea, besides twenty-four guard-ships, and above one hundred frigates, of which ninety of

each class were immediately put in commission; while seamen of the best description, to the amount of eighty-five thousand, were drawn from her inexhaustible merchant service. Unable to face their enemies in large squadrons, the French navy remained in total inactivity; but their merchants, destitute of any pacific employment for their money, fitted out an immense number of privateers, which, for a considerable time, proved extremely injurious to British commerce.¹

The efforts of Government at the same period were vigorously directed to the suppression of sedition in Great Britain. The great extent and obvious danger of the illegal and revolutionary societies which had been formed in every part of England, in close alliance with the French Convention, left no room for doubt that vigorous measures were necessary to arrest the contagion. For this purpose, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was proposed in Parliament by government, and excited the most angry discussions both in the legislature and the nation. Mr Fox objected in the strongest manner to the proposed measure, as destructive to the best principles of English liberty. "Was the government about," he exclaimed, "in their rage at the hatred excited by their tyranny, to erect tribunals to punish the indignant public? Was terror, as in France, to be made the order of the day, and not a voice to be allowed to be lifted against government? Was it resolved to demolish the British constitution, one part after another, under pretence of preventing its destruction by French principles? The object of the societies, which they did not scruple to avow, was to obtain universal suffrage. The word Convention was now held up as an object of alarm, as if from it some calamity impended over the country; and yet, what was a convention but an assembly? If the people did any thing illegal, they were liable to be imprisoned and punished at the common law. Did it follow that, because improper ideas of government had been taken up by the French, or because liberty had been there abused, similar misfortunes would befall this country? Had that nation been protected by a Habeas Corpus Act—had the government been constrained, by standing laws to respect the rights of the community, these tenets would never have found an entrance into that

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¹ New Ann.
Register,
pp 336-349.
Jom. v. 278.
James, 1.
App. No. 6.

4.
Suspension
of the Ha-
beas Corpus
Act.
Argument
of Mr Fox
against it.

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unhappy country. By parity of reason they were only to be dreaded here, if the safeguards of the constitution were removed. Were the freedom of meeting to complain of grievances to be taken away, what would soon become of our boasted constitution? And if it is to be withdrawn till the discontented are rooted out, or the thirst for uncontrolled power assuaged in government, it will never be restored, and the liberties of Englishmen are finally destroyed."

5.
And of Mr
Pitt in its
support.

On the other hand, it was contended by Mr Pitt, that the question was, "Whether the dangers threatened to the state were not greater than any arising from the suspension proposed, which was only to last for six months, and in the mean time would not affect the rights of any class of society. The truth was, that we were driven to the necessity of imitating French violence, to resist the contagion of French principles. Was lenity to be admitted when the constitution was at stake? Were a Convention upon Jacobin principles once established, who could foresee where it would end? Not to stop the progress of their opinions, were no better than granting a toleration to sedition and anarchy. It is in vain to deny the existence of designs against the Government and Constitution; and what mode of combating them can be so reasonable as the present suspension, which does not oppose the right of the people to meet together to petition for reform or a redress of abuses, but only aims at preventing the establishment of a power in the state superior to that of Parliament itself? The papers produced before the Committee demonstrate clearly that this is their object, and that they are leagued with all the societies which have brought desolation upon France; they have chosen a central spot to facilitate the assembly of demagogues from all quarters. Every society has been requested to transmit an account of its numbers, and arms have been procured and liberally distributed: unless these proceedings are speedily checked, the government will soon be set at nought, and a revolution with all its horrors overspread the land." Moved by these arguments, the House of Commons passed the bill for suspension by a majority of 261 to 42. It was adopted by the Lords without a division.

May 16.
1 Ann. Reg.
pp. 268-274.
Parl. Deb.
xxx. 274.
299.

Various prosecutions took place in Scotland, which ter-

minated in the conviction and transportation of the accused, of whom Hardy, Palmer, and Muir were the most remarkable. But the result was different in England. The attention of the people was deeply excited by the trial of Hardy, Thelwall, and Horne Tooke, for treason in London. The documents on which the prosecution was founded, left no doubt that these persons had been deeply implicated in designs for the violent change, if not the total subversion of the government, by means of a convention of their own formation, not through the constitutional channel of Parliament.* The prosecutions, therefore, were justifiable and necessary; and yet—so readily does good spring out of the conflicting feelings of a really free community—their acquittal by the independent verdict of a British jury is to be regarded as an eminently fortunate event at that period. After so signal a triumph of popular principle, the most factious lost the power of alleging that the liberties of England were on the decline; satisfied

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6.

Trials for
treason in
England and
Scotland.

* The combination against which, on this occasion, the powers of government were exercised, was of the most extensive kind, and embraced the whole of Great Britain in its ramifications. The prisoners were charged with high treason, in having conspired to subvert the King and levy war against his government. The trial, which occupied three weeks, excited the utmost interest in all parts of the country: during its whole continuance, the avenues to the court and the court itself were filled with anxious spectators. The opening speech of Mr Scott, the Attorney-General, (afterwards Lord Eldon,) occupied nine hours: the reply of Mr Erskine and Sir Vicary Gibbs was of the same length. The prisoners were indicted for high treason—the only step in the whole proceeding of which the policy was questionable, as it required a strained, or at least strict interpretation of the law to bring the prisoners within the provision of the treason law, on the footing of having been guilty of "Constructive Treason;" whereas the evidence of their being guilty of the minor crime of sedition, was not only ample but overwhelming. Hardy was the secretary of the association, the professed object of which was Parliamentary Reform: but the illegality and danger of which consisted in this, that this, a legitimate object, if pursued by legitimate means, was proposed to be brought about, not by the lawful means which the constitution recognised, but by intimidation, violence, and, if necessary, insurrection. In the "Rights of Man" by Thomas Paine, a member of the French Convention, which the association extensively circulated, it was said—"Hereditary succession requires a belief from man to which his reason cannot subscribe: the more ignorant any country is, the better is it fitted for that species of government. *A general revolution in the construction of governments is necessary.* Usurpation cannot alter the right of things. Sovereignty as a matter of right appertains to the nation only, not any individual. The romantic and barbarous classing of men into kings and subjects, though it may suit courtiers cannot do so to citizens. All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny. When the bagatelles of monarchy, regency, and hereditary succession shall be exposed with all their absurdities, a new ray of light will be thrown over the world, and the revolution will derive new strength by being universally understood. It is now the cause of all nations against all courts." The addresses from Republican Societies in France to the Society, and found among their papers, & the Association to them, or to the corresponding Societies in Great Britain, contained ample evidence of their practical adoption and

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with this great victory over their supposed oppressors, the people relapsed into their ancient habits of loyalty; while the vehement demagogues who had made so narrow an escape from the scaffold, hesitated before resorting again to practices of which the peril to themselves, as well as to the country, was now made manifest. The spirit of innovation, deprived of foreign support, and steadily resisted by the government, rapidly withered in the British soil: the passions of men, turned into another channel, soon fixed on different objects, and the prosecution of the war with France became as great a source of interest to the multitude, as it had ever been to remodel the constitution after the example of the Constituent Assembly.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
268, 269.

The continuance of the war again gave rise to animated debates in both Houses of Parliament. On the part of the Opposition, it was urged by Mr Fox and Mr Sheridan,

asures to carry into execution these principles. A letter signed by the chairman and secretary, 11th Oct. 1792, contained these expressions—"Tyrants and tyranny are no more. How well purchased will be, *though at the expense of much blood*, the glorious and unprecedented advantage of saying 'Man-kind is free.'" In answer to one of the vehement addresses of the French Convention, the President's letter found entered in the books of the Association, bears—"You have addressed us with something more than good wishes (a supply of arms for the soldiers of freedom) since the condition of our warriors has excited your solicitude. The defenders of our liberty will one day be the supporters of your own. The moment cannot be distant when the people of France will offer their congratulations to a *National Convention in England*." These, and a vast number of documents containing similar expressions, left no room for doubt that the object of the Association was to erect a *Legislature of their own* which was to supersede the Parliament. Indeed this was openly avowed by them. On 20th Jan. 1794, a general address was published and circulated by the Society, which bore—"How are we to seek redress: From the laws, as long as any redress can be obtained from them; but we must not expect figs from thistles. We must have redress from *our own laws, and not from the laws of our plunderers, enemies, and oppressors*." And it was declared "that upon the introduction of any bill inimical to the liberties of the people, such as suspending the Habeas Corpus Act," the committee should issue summonses forthwith for the convocation of a general convention of the people for the purpose of taking such measures into their consideration. On 30th Jan. 1794, a secret committee was appointed to consider what measures might be necessary according to the measures of the House of Commons; and at a meeting held on Dec. 28th 1793, Mr Redhead Yorke, one of the speakers, said to the Association, "That it was impossible to do any thing without some blood, and he hoped to see *Mr Pitt's and the King's heads upon Temple Bar*;" whereupon all the meeting rose up and shook hands with him.

These, and similar documents and proceedings, left no room as to the objects of the association; but still there was great legal difficulty in bringing the case of the prisoners within the rule as to overt acts, either showing an intent to compass the king's death, or levy war against him, or depose him from his government. Accordingly, many able lawyers think the acquittal of the prisoners of the high treason charged, how clearly soever they were found guilty of sedition, was a fortunate circumstance, as it at once saved the law and stopped the treason.—See *State Trials*, October 26, 1794; and *Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon*, i. 240-261.

"That the conduct of government since the war commenced, had been a total departure from the principles of moderation on which they had so much prided themselves before it broke out. They then used language which breathed only the strictest neutrality, and this continued even after the King had been dethroned, and many of the worst atrocities of the Revolution had been perpetrated: but now, even though we did not altogether reject negotiation, we put forth declarations evidently calculated to render it impossible, and shake all faith in our national integrity. The Allies had first by Prince Cobourg issued a proclamation, in which they engaged to retain whatever strongholds they might conquer, merely in pledge for Louis XVII.; and five days afterwards, to their eternal disgrace, they revoked that very proclamation, and openly avowed the intention, since uniformly acted upon, of making a methodical war of conquest on France. Supposing that the English government should be able to clear itself of all share in this infamous transaction, what was to be said of the declaration issued by Lord Hood on the 23d August, on the capture of Toulon, wherein he took possession of the town on the express conditions of maintaining the constitution of 1789, preserving the fleet of Louis XVII., and protecting all Frenchmen who repaired to our standard? after which came a dark enigmatical declaration from his Majesty, which, stripped of the elegant rubbish with which it was loaded, amounted merely to this, that the restoration of monarchy was the only condition on which we would treat with France.

"Has any thing occurred to alter the probability of success in the war? Have the triumphs of the coalition in Flanders been so very brilliant, the success of Lord Moira's expedition to Granville so decisive, the efforts at Toulon so victorious, as to afford more cheering prospects than were held out at its commencement? Has the internal condition of that country, and the prospects of the Royalist party, improved so much under the system of foreign attack, as to render it advisable to continue the contest for their sakes? Is not the internal state of France so divided, that it is impossible to say that the Royalist party, even in the districts most attached to monarchical principles, could agree on any form of government? And what have

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7.
Argument
against the
war by Mr
Fox and the
Opposition.

8.
Alleged
errors in the
conducting
of it.

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we done to support them? Liberated the garrisons of Valenciennes and Mayence, when they were shut up within their walls, and given them the means, by the absurd capitulation which we granted, of acting with decisive effect against their Royalist fellow-citizens in the west of France! All the treaties we have entered into contained a clause by which the contracting parties bound themselves not to lay down their arms while any part of the territory of either of them remained in the hands of the enemy. How have they adhered, or are likely to adhere to this stipulation? How has Prussia adhered? Why, she publicly declared her intention of laying down her arms, at the very time when large parts of her allies' territories were in the occupation of the enemy, because she had discovered that the war was burdensome. The Emperor has refused to agree to this secession, and Prussia has been retained an unwilling and feeble combatant on our side only by the bribe of enormous subsidies. It is evident what the result will be: our allies will one by one drop off, or become so inefficient as to be perfectly useless, when the contest proves either perilous or burdensome; and we shall be left alone, with the whole weight of a contest on our own shoulders, undertaken for no legitimate object, continued for no conceivable end.

9.
And its
non-success.

"It is in vain to conceal that we have made no advance whatever towards any rational prospect of closing the contest with either honour or advantage. In the first campaign, the Duke of Brunswick was defeated, and Flanders overrun; in the next, the most formidable confederacy ever formed in Europe has been baffled, and a furious civil war in different parts of the Republic extinguished. What have we to oppose to this astonishing exertion of vigour? The capture of a few sugar islands in the West Indies. Of what avail are they, or even the circumscribing the territorial limits of France itself, when such elements of strength exist in its interior? But let us revert to our old policy of attending to our maritime concerns, and disregarding the anarchy and civil wars of the neighbouring states; and then, indeed, the conquests in the East and West Indies would afford an excellent foundation for the only desirable object, a general pacification.¹

¹ Parl. Hist.
xxxv 613,
623, 632.

All views of aggrandisement on the part of France are *evidently unattainable, and must be abandoned by that power* : so that the professed object of the war, permanent security to ourselves, may now securely be obtained."

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On the other hand, it was contended by Mr Pitt and Mr Jenkinson,* "That the real object of the war from the outset had been to obtain indemnity for the past and security for the future. Are either of these objects likely to be obtained at this period? At present, there is no security for the continuance of peace, even if it were signed, for a single hour. Every successive faction which has risen to the head of affairs in France, has perished the moment that it attempted to imprint moderation on the external or internal measures of the Revolution. What overthrew the administration of Necker? Moderation! What destroyed the Orleanists, the Girondists, the Brissotins, and all the various parties which have successively risen and fallen in that troubled hemisphere? Moderation! What has given its long lease of power to the anarchical faction of which Robespierre is the head? The total want of it: the infernal energy, unmeasured wickedness of its measures. What prospect is there of entering into a lasting accommodation with a power, or what the guarantee for the observance of treaties by a faction, whom a single nocturnal tumult may hurl from the seat of government, to make way for some other more outrageous and extravagant than itself? The campaign hitherto has only lasted a few weeks; yet in that time we have taken Landrecy, formerly considered as the key of France, and though we have lost Courtray and Menin, yet the vigour and resolution with which the whole allied army has combated, gives good reason to hope, if not for a successful march to Paris, (which, however, is by no means improbable,) at least for such an addition to the frontier barrier as may prove at once a curb on France, and an excellent base for offensive operations. It is impossible to say what government we are to propose for France in the event of the Jacobins being overthrown, because that must depend on the circumstances of the times, and the wishes of its inhabitants; but this much may safely be affirmed, that, with

10.
Reply by Mr
Pitt and Mr
Jenkinson.

* Afterwards Lord Liverpool.

CHAP. the sanguinary faction which now rules its councils, accom-
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11.
 Statement of
 the objects
 of the war.

"The present is not a contest for distant or contingent objects: it is not a contest for power or glory: as little is it a contest for commercial advantage, or any particular form of government. It is a contest for the security, the tranquillity, and the very existence of Great Britain, connected with that of every established government, and every country in Europe. This was the object of the war from its commencement; and every hour tends more strongly to demonstrate its justice. In the outset, the internal anarchy of France, how distressing or alarming soever, was not deemed a sufficient ground for the hostile interference of this country: but could the same be affirmed, when the King was beheaded, and a revolutionary army, spreading every where the most dangerous doctrines, overwhelmed the whole Low Countries? Is that danger now at an end? The prospect of bringing the war to a conclusion, as well as the security for any engagements which we may form with France, must ultimately depend upon the destruction of those principles now triumphant in that distracted country, which are alike subversive of every regular government, and destructive of all good faith. We do not disclaim any interference in the internal affairs of that country; on the contrary, should an opportunity occur where it may be practised with advantage, we will not engage to abstain from it: we only say, that such is not the primary object of the contest; and that, if attempted, it will be, as has been the case in all former wars, considered as an operation of the war.

12.
 Impossibility of nego-
 tiation.

"There is no contradiction between the proclamation of Lord Hood at Toulon, and the declaration of his Majesty of 29th October. Both promise protection to such of the French as choose to declare for a constitutional monarchy; and to both we shall adhere. By entering into a negotiation, we should give confidence and vigour to the French, and entirely dissolve the formidable confederacy formed to lower its ambition. While the present system continues in France, we can have no peace, on any terms short of absolute ruin and dishonour: by an express law of their constitution, any Frenchman who shall enter into a

negotiation with this country on any other terms than surrendering our constitution, dethroning our virtuous sovereign, and introducing into this country the horrible anarchy which prevails in their distracted state, is declared a traitor. Are we prepared to make such sacrifices to obtain the blessings of fraternisation with the disciples of Robespierre? Nor let it be supposed that the colonial conquests we have made are of little moment in bringing about in the end a termination to this frightful contest. Is it of no moment in the first year of the war to have cut up the resources, and destroyed the sinews of the commerce of our enemies? The injury to their revenues thence arising may not be felt during the continuance of the monstrous and gigantic expedients of finance to which they have had recourse; but it is not on that account the less real, or the less likely to be felt on the restoration of such a regular government as may afford us any chance of an accommodation." On a division, the House, by a majority of two hundred and eight to fifty-one, supported the government.¹

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¹ Parl. Hist.
xxx. 156,
632, 659.

The supplies voted by Parliament for the prosecution of the war, during the year 1794, were proportioned to the increasing magnitude and importance of the strife in which the nation was engaged. For the service of the navy eighty-five thousand men were voted; thirty thousand men were added to the regular native army; and the total number under arms in the British dominions, including fencibles and militia, was raised to 140,000 men, besides forty thousand foreign soldiers employed on the Continent. These numbers were described by Mr Pitt as "unparalleled, and such as could hardly be exceeded;" such was the happy ignorance of those times in regard to the exertions of which a nation was capable. To meet these extraordinary efforts an income of £20,000,000, besides £11,800,000 for the charge of the debt, was required; and for this purpose a loan of £11,000,000 was voted by Parliament; so early in the contest was this ruinous system of laying upon posterity the burdens of the moment adopted.²

13.
Supplies and
forces voted
for the year
1794.

² Parl. Hist.
xxx. 557,
563. Ann.
Reg. 69, 70

Meanwhile, the ascendancy of the English navy soon produced its wonted effects on the colonial possessions of the enemy. Soon after the commencement of hostilities, Tobago was taken by a British squadron: and in the

14.
British con-
quests in the
West Indies.
April 1793.

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1794.
March 23.

4th April.

¹ Ann. Reg.
p. 188, 337,
339, 340.
Th. vi. 301,
302.

15.
Frightful
state of St
Domingo.

² Th. vi. 301.
Mackenzie's
St Domingo,
301, 232.

beginning of March 1794, an expedition was fitted out against Martinique, which, after a vigorous resistance, fell on the 23d. Shortly after, the principal Gts in St Domingo were wrested from the Republicans by the English forces, while the wretched planters, a prey to the flames lighted by Brissot and the friends of negro emancipation, at the commencement of the revolution, of which a full account will hereafter be given, were totally ruined. No sooner was this success achieved, than the indefatigable English commander, Sir John Jarvis, and Sir Charles Grey, turned their arms against St Lucia, which was subjected to the British dominions on the 4th April. Guadaloupe was next attacked, and on the 25th, that fine island, with all its rich dependancies, was added to the list of the conquered colonies. Thus, in little more than a month, the French were entirely dispossessed of their West India possessions, with hardly any loss to the victorious nation.¹

The once beautiful island of St Domingo meanwhile continued a prey to the frightful disorders arising from precipitate emancipation. "It had gone through," says the Republican historian, "the greatest succession of calamities of which history makes mention." The Whites had at first embraced with enthusiasm the cause of the Revolution, and the Mulattoes, to whom the Constituent Assembly had extended the gift of freedom, were not less attached to the principles of democracy, and openly aspired to dispossess the planters, by force, of those political privileges which had hitherto been their exclusive property. But, in the midst of these contests, the negroes had revolted against both, and without distinguishing friend from foe, applied the firebrand indiscriminately to every civilised dwelling. Distracted by these horrors, the Constituent Assembly at once declared them all free. From the moment that emancipation was announced, the colony became the scene of the most horrible devastations; and the contending parties among the higher orders mutually threw upon each other the blame of having brought a frightful party into their contests, whose ravages were utterly destructive to both.² In truth it was owing to neither, but to the precipitate measures of emancipation, dictated by the ardent and inexperienced philanthropists

of the Constituent Assembly; which have consigned that unhappy colony, after thirty years of unexampled suffering, to a state of slavery, under the name of "The Rural Code," infinitely worse than that of the French planters.

In the Mediterranean also the power of the British navy was speedily felt. The disaster at Toulon having totally paralysed the French navy in that quarter, the English fleet was enabled to carry the land forces, now rendered disposable by the evacuation of Toulon, to whatever quarter they chose. Corsica was the selected point of attack, which early in 1794 had shown symptoms of revolt against the Republican authorities. Three thousand soldiers and marines were landed, and after some inconsiderable successes, nearly effected the subjugation of the island by the capture of the fortress of Bastia, which capitulated at the end of May. It is remarkable that NELSON was employed in this service, and by an extraordinary coincidence Napoleon had shortly before been engaged in an expedition which set sail from it against Ajaccio; so that the arms of both the British hero and the future French emperor were employed first in any considerable command in the same island, and in expeditions, the one from, the other against, the same petty fortress. The only remaining stronghold of the Republicans, Calvi, was besieged until the 1st August, when it surrendered to the British arms. The crown of Corsica, offered by Paoli, and the aristocratical party, to the King of England, was accepted, and efforts immediately made to confer upon the inhabitants a constitution similar to that of Great Britain; a project about as practicable as it would have been to have clothed the British plains with the fruits which ripen under its sunny cliffs.¹

But a more glorious triumph was awaiting the British arms. The French government having, by great exertions, got twenty-six ships of the line into a state fit for service at Brest, and being extremely anxious to secure the arrival of a large fleet laden with provisions, which was approaching from America, and promised to relieve the famine which was now felt with uncommon severity in all parts of France, sent positive orders to Admiral Villaret Joyeuse to put to sea. On the 20th of May, the

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16.
And in the
Mediterra-
nean, where
Corsica is
reduced.

1 Jom. v.
192. Ann.
Reg. 340,
341.

17.
Prepara-
tions for the
battle of the
1st June,
by Admiral
Howe with
the Channel
Fleet.

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Republicans set sail ; and on the 28th, Lord Howe, who was well aware of the expected arrival of the convoy, and kept a sharp look-out by means of his inshore squadron, soon bore in sight, with the Channel fleet of England, consisting of twenty-six line-of-battle ships. The French were immediately formed in line, in order of battle, and a partial action ensued between the rearguard of their line and the vanguard of the British squadron ; in the course of which, the *Revolutionnaire* was so much damaged that she struck to the *Audacious*, but not being taken possession of by the victors before nightfall, was towed the following morning into Rochefort. During the next day the manœuvres were renewed on both sides, each party endeavouring to obtain the weathergage of the other ; and Lord Howe, at the head of his fleet, passed through the French squadron. But the whole ships not having taken the position assigned to them, the action, after a severe commencement, was discontinued, and the British Admiral strove with the utmost skill to maintain the wind of the enemy. During the two following days a thick fog concealed the rival fleets from each other, though they were so near, that both sides were well aware that a great battle was approaching, and the officers on either with difficulty restrained the ardour by which their crews were animated.¹

1 *Jom. v.*
283, 285.
James, l.
205-219.
Th. vi. 304.
Ann. Reg.
342, 343.

18.
Howe breaks
the French
line.

At length, on the 1st June, a day ever memorable in the naval annals of England, the sun broke forth with unusual splendour, and discovered the French fleet in order of battle, a few miles from the English, awaiting the combat, while an agitated sea promised the advantage of the wind to an immediate attack. Lord Howe instantly bore down, in an oblique direction, upon the enemy's line, designing to repeat the manœuvre long known, though seldom as yet practised, in the British navy, so ingeniously traced to scientific principles by Clerk of Eldin, and so successfully carried into execution by Rodney, on the suggestion of Sir Charles Douglas, his captain of the fleet, on the 12th April.* Having the

* An animated and interesting controversy, conducted with remarkable acuteness and seal on both sides, took place twenty years ago, as to whether Mr Clerk of Eldin, author of the "*Naval Tactics*," or Sir Charles Douglas, captain of the fleet to Rodney, had the merit of having first discovered the celebrated manœuvre of breaking the enemy's line, and attack-

weatherage of the enemy, he was enabled to break their line near the centre, and double with a preponderating force on the one-half of their squadron. The signal he displayed was No. 39, the purport of which was, "that having the weatherage of the enemy, the Admiral means to pass between the ships of their line and engage them to leeward, leaving, however, a discretion to each captain to engage on the windward or leeward." The French fleet was drawn up in close line, stretching nearly east

ing them to leeward. It was conducted by Professor Playfair and Mr William Clerk, son of the author of the "Naval Tactics," on one side, and the gallant Sir Howard Douglas, son of Sir Charles, on the other. It was admitted on all sides, that Sir Charles—who was beside Rodney when passing to leeward of the French line on the contrary tack, and having failed in the attempt to weather their van on 12th April 1782, seeing a gap in the enemy's line, suddenly, and on the inspiration of the moment, suggested in the most energetic manner the passing through, to the admiral, by whom the advice was instantly followed—was the person who had the merit of having first carried into execution that brilliant manœuvre. But the point was, whether Sir Charles Douglas did this on his own original impulse at that moment, as Wellington did the flank attack on the opening in the French line at Salamanca, or whether he did so in consequence of having previously been made acquainted with the suggestions of Mr Clerk of Eldin on the subject.

The main strength of Mr Clerk of Eldin's partisans was founded in the fact, which was proved by a great number of concurring witnesses, that Lord Rodney, especially in his later years, frequently said, with the generosity which so often accompanies real elevation of mind, that he had gained the victory of the 12th April, in consequence of having studied and adopted Mr Clerk's suggestions contained in his "Naval Tactics," printed and circulated in the January preceding. It was stated also by various persons that Lord Cranstoun, who had been on board the fleet going out, said repeatedly that he had heard Rodney, at his own table during the voyage, discuss Mr Clerk's projects, and express his intention of breaking the line, in pursuance of his suggestions, if he fell in with the enemy. These testimonies, which came from the most respectable persons, embracing among others Sir Walter Scott, Lord Chief Commissioner Adam, and many others, naturally produced a great impression, and amply justified the zeal with which the family and friends of Mr Clerk of Eldin strove to appropriate to him the merit of the original idea on the subject. To this it was added, that Sir Charles Douglas had had several conferences with Mr Clerk on the subject of naval tactics, at one of which Lord Chief Commissioner Adam was present, shortly before leaving Britain, which he was said to have done some months after Rodney, who set sail from Portsmouth on 2d January 1782, in which the plan of breaking the line was distinctly explained to that officer by Mr Clerk.

On the other hand, Sir Howard Douglas, on behalf of his father, advanced a great variety of proofs of a still more convincing, because a more authentic kind. The "Naval Tactics," as it now stands, was published for the first time in 1796; but fifty copies were thrown off and distributed in the first week of January 1782, three months before Rodney's battle was fought, and the case for Mr Clerk's partisans was maintained on the hypothesis, said to be established by conclusive evidence, that Rodney had seen, or at least heard of, one of these copies, and adopted its principles. But Sir Howard overturned all these inferences, by proving that the breaking the line and attacking to leeward—the peculiar manœuvre which gained the battle of 12th April—was not mentioned in the edition of the "Naval Tactics" printed in 1782 at all, but appeared for the first time in the edition of 1796, eight years after the battle was gained. This was admitted by Mr Clerk himself in the

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1 Barrow's
Howe, 232.
Breton, i.
129. James,
i. 147.

and west ; and a heavy fire commenced upon the British ships, as soon as they came within range. The English did not come perpendicularly upon their adversaries as at Trafalgar, but made sail abreast in such a manner as that each ship should, as soon as possible, cut the line, and get alongside of its destined antagonist, and engage it to leeward, so that, if worsted, the enemy could not get away.¹

1790 edition.* It is evident, therefore, that whether Rodney or Sir Charles Douglas knew of the 1782 edition or not, when the battle of 12th April in that year was fought, it is not from it they could have taken the idea of the brilliant manœuvre which won the victory. In truth, various accounts from eyewitnesses concurred in stating, that, so far from the breaking of the line and engaging to leeward having been previously thought or determined on by Rodney, it was taken up at the moment by Sir Charles Douglas in consequence of having observed an accidental gap in the French line in the middle of the battle, and forced by him, after a considerable altercation and much resistance on his part, on Rodney.† Sir Howard has shown too, from the log of the vessel in which he sailed, that Lord Cranstoun could not have heard the conversations said to have been reported by him at the admiral's table on the voyage out, as he only arrived in time to dine with him the day before the battle. In regard to the assertion, that Sir Charles Douglas sailed some months after Rodney, and that in the interval Mr Clerk had met him, and explained the breaking of the line, it appeared from the log of the Formidable, that Rodney and Sir Charles left London together on the 2d December 1781, and on the 2d January 1782 sailed together for the West Indies. Lord Chief Commissioner Adam, when applied to on the subject, declared he had no recollection of any such meeting or conversation. Mr Clerk also himself, in none of the successive editions which he published of his work during his life, ever once asserted he had met with Sir Charles Douglas, or explained his system to him previous to Rodney's victory, although his son said he had done so after his death; an omission which was not likely to have happened, if he had been conscious of having been the original author of the manœuvre which had gained that brilliant victory. Perhaps these conflicting statements may furnish the true key to the fact in regard to this much agitated controversy, which is, that Rodney, conscious that the manœuvre which won the day had been in a manner forced upon him by his flag-captain, was afterwards, in his old age, more solicitous than he would have been in his earlier years, to take the merit of

* These observations (on the attack to the leeward) were intended to be inserted in the first edition of this essay, printed January 1, 1792, as being applicable to the two similar encounters of Lord Rodney on 15th and 19th May 1781, and as well as those of the 27th July, where the adverse fleets had passed each other on contrary tacks. But it was afterwards thought proper to omit them, as it was conceived it might be prejudicial to the other parts of the work to advance any thing doubtful: no example of cutting an enemy's line in an attack from the leeward before that time having been given.—“Naval Tactics,” p. 119: note, edition 1790.

† Several most respectable persons on board Rodney's ship (the Formidable) at the time Sir Charles Douglas suggested the breaking of the line to the admiral, concur in this statement. Take, for example, the following from Captain Sir Charles Dashwood, then side-deck to Rodney on board the Formidable:—“After attentively observing the enemy's line, and remaining some time in deep meditation, Sir Charles said, addressing the admiral, ‘Sir George, I give you joy of the victory.’ ‘Pooh,’ said Rodney, ‘the day is not half won yet.’ ‘Break the line, Sir George,’ said Douglas: ‘the day is your own, and I will ensure the victory.’ ‘No,’ said the admiral; ‘I will not break my line.’ After another request and another refusal, Sir Charles desired the helm to be put a-port, upon which Sir George ordered it to starboard. Sir Charles again ordered it a-port: upon which Rodney sternly observed, ‘Remember I am commander-in-chief: starboard, sir.’ In two minutes they again met on the deck, and Sir Charles said, ‘Only break the line, Sir George, and the day is your own.’ The admiral then said, in a quick hurried way, ‘Well, well, do as you like.’ ‘Port the helm,’ upon this cried Sir Charles. Firing commenced on the larboard side; in two minutes the Formidable passed between two French ships, each nearly touching us, followed by the Namur and the other ships astern; and from that minute victory was decided in our favour.” Sir Joseph Yorke's and F. Theobald's evidence is precisely to the same effect.—See Sir Howard Douglas's Appendix, p. 1—10.

Had the Admiral's orders been literally obeyed, or capable of complete execution, the most decisive naval victory recorded in history would in all probability have attended the British arms. But the importance of specific obedience in the vital point of engaging the enemy to leeward was not then generally understood, and the enemy's line was so regular and compact, that in most places it was thought to be, and in some was, impervious, and five only of the ships after the Queen Charlotte, viz., the Defence, Marlborough, Royal George, Queen, and Brunswick, succeeded in passing through. The Cæsar, in particular, which was the leading vessel when the signal for close action was flying from the Admiral's mast-head, backed her main-topsails, and engaged on the windward of the enemy, and the Gibraltar also omitted to cross the French Admiral for engaging his second a-head; a disheartening circumstance, though arising, as it afterwards appeared, from want of capacity rather than timidity on the part of its captain.* Howe, however, was not discouraged, but held steadily on, walking on the front of his poop along with Sir Roger Curtis, Sir Andrew Douglas, and other officers, while the crew were falling fast around him, and the spars and rigging rattled down on all sides, under the terrible and constantly increasing fire of the

the movement, and claim forethought and consideration on his part for a step which was in truth the happy inspiration of genius at the moment, in another, to whom the glory of the success really belongs.

The breaking of the line and engaging the enemy's fleet to leeward, since so often and successfully practised against the French at sea, though not generally done before, was not unknown in the British service. A century before, it had been practised in a battle with the Dutch.—“Sir George, with nine of his headmost ships, charged through the Dutch fleet and got the weather-gage.”—LEDYARD'S *Naval History*, b. iii. p. 542. This is the account of the battle, 16th August 1652. In truth, this manœuvre has been adopted by military genius on the inspiration of the moment, from the earliest times, both at land and sea. It was the leading principle of the fierce engagements between the brass-headed galleys of antiquity, and won their greatest naval victories; it was applied with decisive success by Wellington when he interposed in the gap between Thonière's division and the remainder of the army at Salamanca; and by Napoleon when he hurled Soult forward to seize the deserted hill of Pratzen, in the centre of the Allied line at Austerlitz.

See, for this interesting controversy, *Edinburgh Review*, April 1830, vol. li. p. 1; PLAYFAIR'S *Works*, iii. 461, and SEA HOWARD DOUGLAS'S *Naval Evolutions*, London, 1832, where the subject is most ably treated, and all the contemporary authorities from eyewitnesses on Rodney's victories are to be found.

* The rudder of the Cæsar had been early in the action disabled by a chance shot, which was the main cause of that vessel not breaking the line; though the captain was afterwards, at his own request, brought to a court-martial, and dismissed the service.

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¹ Harrow's
Life of
Howe, 232,
233. Bren-
ton, i. 129,
130. James,
i. 147, 148.
Vict. et
Conq. iii.
20. Jonn. v.
290. Toul.
iv. 247.

20.
Desperate
conflict
which en-
sued.

enemy. With perfect composure the British Admiral ordered not a shot to be fired, but the pilot to lay him alongside of the *Montagne* of 120 guns, the greatest vessel in the French line, and probably the largest then in the world. So awful was the prospect that awaited the French vessel from the majestic advance of the British Admiral, that Jean Bon Saint André, the French Commissioner of the Convention on board, overcome with terror, took refuge below. After many entreaties, Howe allowed a straggling fire to be returned, but from the main and quarter deck only; and reserving his whole broadside, poured it with awful force into the stern of the *Montagne*, as he slowly passed through the line between that huge three-decker and the *Jacobin* of eighty guns. So close did the ships pass on this occasion, that the Tricolor flag, as it waved at the *Montagne's* flag-staff, brushed the main and mizen shrouds of the *Queen Charlotte*; and so terrible was the effect of the broadside, that three hundred men were killed or wounded by that discharge.¹

Fearful of encountering a similar broadside on the other side, the captain of the *Jacobin* stretched across under the *Montagne's* lee, and thus threw herself a little behind that vessel right in the *Queen Charlotte's* way, in the very position which Howe had designed for himself to engage the enemy's three-decker. The English Admiral, therefore, was obliged to alter his course a little, and pass aslant between the two vessels, and having thus got between them, opened a tremendous fire on both. The *Jacobin* soon made sail, to get out of the destructive range, and being to the leeward of the British admiral, he effected this: but the *Montagne* could not do the same, being to the windward, and she would unquestionably have been taken, as she was hardly firing at all after the first awful broadside, when the foretop-mast of the *Queen Charlotte* came down; upon which the *Montagne*, taking advantage of the momentary inability of her antagonist to move, contrived to sheer off, leaving the British Admiral now engaged with the two ships second and third astern of her. The *Vengeur* of seventy-four guns was warmly engaged at this time with the *Brunswick*, under Harvey; but another French ship, the *Achille*, came up on the other side, and a terrible combat began on the part

of the British vessel, thus engaged on both hands. It was sustained, however, with admirable courage. Captain Harvey was severely wounded in the hottest part of the engagement, but before being carried down, he said—"Persevere, my brave lads, in your duty: continue the action with spirit for the honour of our King and country, and remember my last words, 'The colours of the Brunswick shall never be struck.'" Such heroism was not long of meeting with its reward: the *Ramillies* soon after came up, and opened her fire upon the *Vengeur*; the load was taken off the *Brunswick*; by a fortunate shot the rudder of the French vessel was shot away, and a large opening beat in her stern, into which the water rushed with great violence. The *Vengeur* was now found to be sinking; the *Achille* made off, followed by the *Ramillies*, to which she soon struck; and the *Vengeur* shortly after went down with three hundred and fifty of her crew, four hundred and fifty having been humanely taken off by the boats of the *Alfred* and *Culloden*.^{1*}

The French now began to move off in all quarters, and the British ships with their prizes closed round their Admiral. The damage sustained by the English was inconsiderable, except in four ships, which were disabled for further service; fifteen sail of the line were ready to renew the battle; they had still the weathergage of the enemy; ten of the French line had struck, though six only of them had been secured, and five of their ships were dismasted, and were slowly going off under their sprit-sails. Had Nelson been at the head of the fleet, there can be little doubt the disabled ships would all have been taken, and perhaps a victory as decisive as *Trafalgar* totally

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1 James, i.
162, 165.
Brenton, i.
130, 131.
Barrow's
Howe, 233,
234. Jom.
v. 291
Toul. iv.
247.

21.
Results of
the battle.

* It was stated in the French Convention, and has been repeated in all the French histories, that when the *Vengeur* sank, her crew were shouting "Vive la Republique!" Knowing that the gallantry of the French was equal to such an effort, the author with pleasure transcribed this statement in his former editions: but he has now ascertained that it was unfounded, not only from the account of Captain Brenton, (i. 131,) but from the information given him by a gallant naval officer, Admiral Griffiths, who was in the *Brunswick* on the occasion, and saw the *Vengeur* go down. There were cries heard, but they were piteous cries for relief, which the British boats afforded to the utmost of their power. Among the survivors of the *Vengeur*'s crew were Captain Renaudin and his son, a brave boy of twelve years of age. They were taken up by different boats, and mutually mourned each other as dead: till they accidentally met at Portsmouth in the street, and rushed into each other's arms with a rapture indescribable. They were both soon after exchanged: a braver and more humane father and son never breathed.—JAMES, i. 165.

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destroyed the Brest fleet. But the British admirals at that period were in a manner ignorant of their own prowess; the securing of the prizes taken was deemed the great object, and thus the pursuit was discontinued, and the enemy, contrary to all expectation, got their dismasted ships off, and before dark were entirely out of sight. Six ships of the line, however, besides the *Vengeur*, which sank, remained in the possession of the British Admiral, and were brought into Plymouth; while the remains of the French squadron, diminished by eight of their number, and with a loss of eight thousand men, took refuge in

1 *Jom. v.* 200,
Toul. iv. 248.
Ann. Reg.
p. 34.

James, i. 172,
174. Bren-
ton, i. 141,
148. Bar-
row's *Howe*,
251, 252.

the roads of Berthaume, and ultimately regained the harbour of Brest, shattered, dismasted, riddled with shot: how different from the splendid fleet which had so recently departed amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants! * The loss of the British was two hundred and ninety killed, and eight hundred and fifty-eight wounded, in all eleven hundred and forty-eight, being less than that sustained in the six French ships alone which were made prizes.[†]

22.
Safe arrival
of the
American
convoy in
Brest har-
bour.

The Republicans were in some degree consoled for this disaster by the safe arrival of the great American convoy, chiefly laden with flour, consisting of one hundred and sixty sail, and valued at £5,000,000 sterling; a supply of incalculable importance to the wants of a population whom the Reign of Terror and civil dissension had brought to the verge of famine. They entered the harbour of Brest a few days after the engagement, having escaped, as if by a miracle, the vigilance of the British cruisers. Their safety was, in a great degree, owing to the sagacity of the Admiral, who traversed the scene of destruction a day or two after the battle, and judging from the magnitude and number of the wrecks which were floating about, that a terrible battle must have taken place, concluded that the victorious party would not be in a condition for pursuit, and resolved to hold on his course for the French harbour.²

2 *Jom. v.*
291.

* The prisoners taken in the prizes were 2300: the killed and wounded in them 1270, besides 320 who went down in the *Vengeur*.—*Barrow's Life of Howe*, 236.

† The following were the respective guns and weight of metal in this memorable battle:—

		British.	French.
Number of guns, *	- - -	1087	1107
Weight of metal,	- - -	22,976	28,126
Number of men,	- - -	17,241	18,989
Tons,	- - -	46,962	52,011

JAMES'S Naval History, i. 142.

Lord Howe gained so decisive a success from the adoption of the same principle which gave victory to Frederic at Leuthen, to Napoleon at Austerlitz, and to Wellington at Salamanca,—viz., to direct an overwhelming force against one-half of the enemy's force, and make the attack obliquely, keeping the weathergage of the enemy, to render it impossible for the ships to leeward to work up to the assistance of those engaged. By this means he reduced one-half of the enemy's fleet to be the passive spectator of the destruction of the other.¹ His mode of attack, which brought his whole squadron at once into action with the enemy, seems clearly preferable to that adopted by Nelson at Trafalgar in sailing down in perpendicular lines; for that exposed the leading ships to imminent danger before the succeeding ones came up. Had he succeeded in penetrating the enemy's line at all points, or his captains implicitly obeyed his directions in that particular, and engaged the whole to leeward, he would have brought twenty ships of the line to Spithead. To a skilful and intrepid squadron, who do not fear to engage at the cannon mouth with their enemy, such a manœuvre offers even greater chances of success at sea than at land, because the complete absence of obstacles on the level expanse of water enables the attacking squadron to calculate with more certainty upon reaching their object; and the advantage of the wind, if once obtained, renders it proportionally difficult for one part of the enemy's line to be brought up to the relief of the other. The introduction of steam vessels of war, either as light ships, or as forming the line of battle itself, promises to assimilate still more closely actions at sea to those at land, and by always putting it in the power of the superior force to bring its opponents to close action and intercept their retreat, promises still greater and more uniform results to the daring tactics of Howe and Nelson.

Never was a victory more seasonable than Lord Howe's to the British Government. The war, preceded as it had been by violent party divisions in England, had been regarded with lukewarm feelings by a large portion of the people; and the friends of freedom dared not wish for the success of the British arms, lest it should extinguish the dawn of liberty in the world. But the Reign of Terror had shocked the best feelings of all the respectable portion

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23.

Tactics by which the victory was gained.

¹ *Jom. v.*288. *Ann. Reg. p. 344.*

24.

Its great moral effect in England.

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¹ Ann. Reg.
p. 282, 283.

25.
Vast mili-
tary pre-
parations of
France, and
their system
of war.

of this party; the execution of Louis had caused the film to drop from the eyes of the most blinded; and the victory of 1st June captivated the affections of the patriotic multitude. The ancient but half extinguished loyalty of the British people wakened at the sound of their victorious cannon; and the hereditary rivalry of the two nations revived at so signal a triumph over the Republican arms. From this period may be dated the commencement of that firm union among the inhabitants of the country, and that ardent enthusiasm in the contest, which soon extinguished the seeds of former dissension, and ultimately carried the British empire triumphant through the severest struggles which had engaged the nation since the days of Alfred.¹

Vast were the preparations for war made by the Committee of Public Salvation in France. Her territory resembled an immense camp; the decrees of the 23d August and 5th September, had precipitated the whole youth of the republic to the frontiers, and twelve hundred thousand men in arms, were prepared to obey the sovereign mandates of the Convention. After deducting from this immense force the garrisons, the troops destined to the service of the interior, and the sick, upwards of seven hundred thousand were ready to act on the offensive—a force much greater than all the European monarchies could bring forward to meet them. These enormous armies, though in part but little experienced, were greatly improved in discipline since the conclusion of the preceding campaign. The months of winter had been sedulously employed in instructing them in the rudiments of the military art; the glorious successes at the close of the year had revived the spirit of conquest among the soldiers, and the whole were directed by a central government, possessing, in the highest degree, the advantage of unity of action and consummate military talent. Wielding at command so immense a military force, the Committee of Public Salvation were prodigal of the blood of their soldiers. To advance incessantly to the attack, to bring up column after column, till the enemy were wearied out, or overpowered, to regard as nothing any losses which led to the advance of Republican standards, were the maxims on which they conducted the war. No other power could venture upon such an expenditure of life, because none had such inexhaustible resources at their

disposal. Money and men abounded in every quarter; the camps were overflowing with conscripts, the fortresses with artillery, the treasury with assignats. The preceding campaign had cost above £100,000,000 sterling, but the resources of government were undiminished. Three-fourths of the whole property of France was at its disposal; and on this vast fund a paper currency was issued, possessing a forced circulation, and amply sufficient for the most prodigal expenditure. The value of assignats in circulation in the course of the year 1794, was not less than £236,000,000 sterling, and there was no appearance of its diminution. The rapid depreciation of this paper, arising from the enormous profusion with which it was issued, was nothing to a power which enforced its mandates by the guillotine; the government creditor was compelled to receive it at par; and it signified nothing to them though he lost his whole fortune in the next exchange with any citizen of the Republic.¹

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¹ Ann. Reg.
322, 324, 345.
Toul. iv. 321.
Jom. v. 2d,
30. Th. vi.
271, 272.
Hist. Parl.
xxvi. 431,
437.

What rendered this military force still more formidable, was the ability with which it was conducted, and the talent which was evidently rising up among its ranks. The genius of Carnot had from the very commencement selected the officers of greatest capacity from among the multitude who presented themselves; and their rapid transference from one situation to another, gave ample opportunities for discovering who were the men on whom reliance could really be placed. The whole ability of France, in consequence of the extinction of civil employment, was centred in the army, and indefatigable exertions were every where made to communicate to headquarters the names of the young men who had distinguished themselves in any grade. The central government, guided by that able statesman, had discovered the real secret of military operations, and by accumulating an overwhelming force upon one part of the enemy's line, soon acquired a decided superiority over the Austrians who adhered with blind obstinacy to the system of extending their forces. In the prosecution of this mode of action, the French had peculiar advantages from the unity of their government, the central situation of their forces, the interior line on which they acted, the fortified towns which guarded their frontier, and the unbounded means of repairing losses, which they possessed. On the

26.
Talent with
which their
military
force was
wielded.

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other hand the Allies, acting on an exterior circle, paralysed by divisions among their sovereigns, and at a distance from their resources, were unable either to combine for any vigorous offensive operations, or render each other any assistance when pressed by the enemy. Incredible efforts were made at the same time to organise and equip this prodigious body of soldiers. "A revolution," said Barère, "must rapidly supply all our wants. It is to the human mind what the sun of Africa is to vegetation. Monarchies require peace, but a republic can exist only in warlike energy. Slaves have need of repose, but freemen of the fermentation of freedom; regular governments of rest, but the French Republic of revolutionary activity." The Ecole Militaire at Paris was speedily re-established; and the youth of the better classes marched on foot from all parts of France, to be there instructed in the rudiments of the military art; one horse out of twenty-five was every where levied from those persons possessing them; and the proprietor paid only nine hundred francs in paper, hardly equivalent, from its depreciation, to a louis in gold. By these means, albeit ruinous to individuals, the cavalry and artillery were furnished with horses, and a considerable body of educated young men rapidly provided for the army. The manufactories of arms at Paris, and in the provinces, were kept in incessant activity; artificial means universally adopted for the production of saltpetre, and gunpowder in immense quantities daily forwarded to the armies.¹

¹ Th. vi. 247.
272. Jom. v.
32. Carnot.
32. Hard.
ii. 457.

27.
Mr Pitt's
efforts to
hold toge-
ther the
alliance.

Indefatigable were the exertions made by Mr Pitt to provide a force on the part of the Allies capable of combating this gigantic foe; and never were the efforts of his master-spirit more required to heal the divisions and extinguish the jealousies which had arisen in the coalition. Poland was the apple of discord which had called forth these separate interests and awakened these jealousies; and in the plans of aggrandisement which all the great continental states were pursuing in regard to that unhappy state, is to be found the true secret of their neglect of the great task of combating the French Revolution, and of its rapid and early success. Prussia, intent on territorial acquisition on the shores of the Vistula, and desirous above every thing of securing Dantzic, the key to that stream, and the great

emporium of the grain commerce in the north of Europe, had already assembled forty thousand men under the King in person for the siege of Warsaw; and the cabinet of Berlin, unable to bear at the same time the expense of a costly war on the eastern and western frontiers of the monarchy, had in consequence greatly diminished their forces on the Rhine, and openly announced their intention of reducing them to the contingent which they were bound to furnish as a member of the empire, which was only twenty thousand men. Orders had even been dispatched to Marshal Moellendorf, who commanded their army on the Rhine, to retreat by divisions towards the Rube; while at the same time, with preposterous inconsistency, Frederick William addressed a letter to the Arch-Chancellor of the empire, in which he bewailed in piteous terms the public danger, and urged the immediate convocation of the Anterior circles to deliberate on the most effectual means of withstanding the revolutionary torrent with which they were menaced.*¹

The cabinet of Vienna was greatly alarmed at this official declaration of the intention of the Prussian government to withdraw from the coalition, and their chagrin was not diminished by the clear perception which they had, that this untimely and discreditable defection was mainly prompted by a desire to secure a share in the partition of Poland, of which they saw little prospect of their being allowed to participate. They used the most pressing instances, therefore, to induce the cabinet of Berlin to change their resolution, offered to take a large portion of the Prussian troops into their own pay, provided the other states of Germany would take upon themselves the

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March 11.

Jan. 31.

¹ Hard. ii.
48b, 490.

28.
Efforts of
the Cabinet
of Vienna to
prevent the
secession of
Prussia.

* "As it is impossible for me," said the King in that letter, "any longer to continue at my own charge a war so remote from the frontiers of my dominions, and attended with so heavy an expense, I have candidly explained my situation to the principal allied powers, and engaged in negotiations with them which are still in dependence. I am, in consequence, under the necessity of applying to the empire, to provide for the costs of my army, if its longer continuance on the theatre of war is deemed essential to the common defence. I implore your Excellency, therefore, that in your quality of Arch-Chancellor of the Empire, you will forthwith convoke the Anterior circles. An immediate provision for my troops at the expense of these circles, is the only means which remains of saving the empire in the terrible crisis which is approaching; and, unless that step is forthwith taken, they can no longer be employed in the common cause, and I must order them, with regret, to bend their steps towards their own frontier, leaving the empire to its own resources."²

² Hard. II.
48c, 490.

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1 Hard. ii.
481, 484.
Jom. v. 29.
Th. vi. 269.

29.
Prussia
openly be-
gins to with-
draw.

March 14.

charges of the remainder, and even urged the formation of a levy *en masse* in all the circles of the empire, immediately threatened with invasion, in order to combat the redoubtable forces which France was pouring forth from all ranks of her population. Austria, however, though so desirous to stimulate others to these last and convulsive efforts, made no attempt to rouse their emulation by setting the example of similar exertions herself. Not a regiment was added to the Imperial armies; and the Prussian cabinet, little solicitous to behold the whole population of the empire combating under the banners of the Cæsars, strenuously resisted the proposal as useless, dangerous, and utterly inconsistent with the principles of the contest in which they were engaged.¹

It soon appeared how ruinous to the common cause this unexpected secession of Prussia would be. The Republican forces in Flanders were nearly a hundred and sixty thousand strong; and Mack, who was entrusted with the chief direction of the campaign by the allied powers, finding that the whole forces which the Allies could assemble in that quarter would not exceed a hundred and fifty thousand, had strongly urged the necessity of obtaining the co-operation of fifty thousand Prussians, in order to cover the Meuse, in conjunction with the Austrian divisions in the neighbourhood of Luxembourg. The Prussians under Moellendorf were cantoned on the two banks of the Seltz, between Oppenheim and Mayence; but when he received the letter from Prince Cobourg requesting his co-operation, he replied in cold and ambiguous terms, "That he was not acquainted with the share which his government may have taken in the formation of the proposed plan of operations: that the views on which it was founded appeared unexceptionable, but that in the existing state of affairs it was attended with obvious inconveniences, and that he could not consent to the march to Treves, lest he should expose Mayence." These declarations of the intentions of Prussia excited the greater sensation in Europe, that ever since the war began it had been supposed that the cabinets of Berlin and Vienna were united in the closest bands of alliance, and the Convention of Pilnitz was universally regarded as the true basis of the anti-revolutionary coalition. The confederacy appeared to

be on the verge of dissolution. Stimulated by the pressing dangers of his situation, the Elector of Mainz, who of all the Germanic powers was exposed to the first attack of the Revolutionists, was indefatigable in his efforts to prevent the withdrawing of the Prussian troops, and by his exertions a proposition was favourably received by the diet of the empire for taking them into the pay of the lesser powers. Marshal Moellendorf soon after received orders to suspend his retreat.¹

This change in the Prussian plans arose from the vast exertions which Mr Pitt at this period made to hold together the bands of the confederacy. Alone of all the statesmen of his day, the English minister perceived the full extent of the danger which menaced Europe from the spreading of the revolutionary torrent over the adjoining states, and the immense peril of this speedily coming to pass from the divisions which were breaking out among the allied powers from the distraction of interests. No sooner, therefore, was he informed of the intended defection of Prussia, than he exerted all his influence to bring back the cabinet of Berlin to more rational sentiments, and liberally advanced the treasures of England to retain the Prussian troops in a contest so vital to none as to Prussia herself. By his exertions a treaty was signed at the Hague between Prussia, Holland, and Great Britain; by which it was stipulated that Prussia should retain an army of sixty-two thousand veterans in the field; while the two latter should furnish a subsidy of £50,000 a-month, besides £400,000 for putting the army into a fit condition to undertake a campaign, and £1, 12s. a-month to each man as an equivalent for the expenses of his maintenance while engaged in active service. By a separate article, it was provided, "that all conquests made by this army, shall be made in the names of the two maritime powers, and shall remain at their disposal during the course of the war, and at the peace shall be made such use of as they shall deem proper."²

However meritorious were the exertions of Mr Pitt, in thus again bringing Prussia into the field, after its government had formally announced the intention of withdrawing from the confederacy, it was in part foreseen — what the event soon demonstrated — that the succours

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March 20.
April 7.
¹ Hard. ii.
480, 481,
501, 502.

30.
But is at length retained in the alliance by a treaty with Great Britain.

April 19.

² Parl. Hist. xxxi. 433, 435. Hard. ii. 504, 505. Martens, v. 610.

31.
Discontent this excited in the Prussian army.

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stipulated from that power would prove of the most inefficient description, and that nothing was to be expected from the troops of a leading state engaged as hirelings contrary to the national feelings, and the secret inclinations of the government, in what they deemed a foreign cause.* The discontent of the troops was loudly proclaimed, when it transpired that they were to be transferred to the pay of Great Britain; and they openly murmured at the disgrace of having the soldiers of the Great Frederick sold like mercenaries to a foreign power. The troops came to the field in terms of the convention, but their gallant officers were fettered by secret instructions, which rendered them of little real service; and the Prussian army had neither earned credit to itself, nor accomplished benefit for the common cause by its conduct in the field, before the Cabinet of Berlin formally withdrew from the alliance.

32.
Plan of the
campaign
formed by
General
Mack.
Forces of
the two
parties.

General Mack, whose subsequent and unexampled misfortunes should not exclude the recollection of the abilities in a particular department which he really possessed, was entrusted by the Austrian and English governments with the preparation of the plan of the campaign; and he proposed one which bore the marks of decided talent, and which, if vigorously carried into effect by a sufficient force, promised the most brilliant results. This was to complete the opening through the French barrier by the capture of Landrecy; and, having done so, march with the whole allied army in Flanders, 160,000 strong, straight by Laon on Paris; while the Prussian forces, by a forward movement on the side of Namur, supported the operation. "With 150,000 men," said he, "I would push forward a strong advanced guard to Paris; with 200,000 I would engage to remain there." He proposed that West Flanders should be inundated by troops at the same time, so that the main army, in the course of its perilous advance, should have no disquietude for its flank and rear. This

* It was asked in the House of Peers, with a too prophetic spirit, by the Marquis of Lansdowne, "Could the King of Prussia, ought the King of Prussia, to divest himself of his natural duties? Could it be expected that he would fulfil engagements so trivial in comparison? Was not Poland likely to furnish him employment for his troops, and that, too, at his own door? There never were two powers hated one another more cordially than Prussia and Austria, and were English guineas likely to allay the discord? Was it not probable that Frederick William would take our subsidies, but find pretexts for evading the performance of any thing in return worthy of the name?" — *Parl. Hist.* xxxi. 456, 458.

plan was ably conceived, and was evidently the one which should have been adopted in the preceding campaign: but it was not adopted, in consequence of the strong remonstrances of the inhabitants of West Flanders against a measure which promised to render their province the theatre of war, and the jealousy of the Prussian government, which precluded any effectual co-operation from being obtained on that side of the line. This left the whole weight of the contest to fall on the Austrians and English, whose forces were not of sufficient numerical strength for the struggle.* Unaware of the immense military resources and ascending spirit of their adversaries, the Allies resolved to capture Landrecy, and from that base march directly to Paris. Preparatory to this movement, their whole army was, on the 16th April, reviewed by the Emperor of Austria on the plains of Cateau; they amounted to nearly a hundred and fifty thousand men, and were particularly distinguished by the superb appearance of the cavalry, constituting a force apparently capable of conquering the world.¹

Instead of profiting by this immense assemblage of strength to fall upon the still scattered, and, in part, undisciplined, forces of their enemies, the troops were on the following day divided into eight columns, to oppose the French forces, which were still divided in that manner. The siege of Landrecy was shortly after formed, while a large portion of the allied army was stationed as a covering force. After ten days of open trenches, and a most severe bombardment, which almost totally destroyed the town, this important fortress capitulated, and the garrison, consisting of five thousand men, was made prisoners of war. During the progress of this attack, the French generals, stimulated by the orders of the Committee of Public Salvation, made reiterated efforts to raise the siege. Their endeavours were much aided by the absurd adherence of the Allies to the old plan of dividing their forces; they

¹ Hard. ii. 478, 522, 528. Ann. Reg. p. 328, 330. Jom. v. 34, 58. Th. vi. 270, 285.

33. Landrecy taken. Efforts of the Republicans to raise the siege. Defeat of the French at Trois-ville.

* The armies were disposed as follows:—

French.		Allies.		
Army of the North	- 220,000	Flanders	- -	140,000
Moselle and Rhine	- 280,000	Duke of York	- -	40,000
Alps	- 60,000	Austrians on the Rhine	- -	60,000
Eastern Pyrenees,	- 80,000	Prussians on ditto	- -	65,000
Western ditto,	- 80,000	Luxembourg	- -	20,000
South	- 60,000	Emigrants	- -	12,000
	<hr/> 780,000			<hr/> 337,000 ²

² Jom. v. 29, 32. Ann. Reg. 322.

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April 26.

tremble at the thoughts of leaving a single road open, as if the fate of the war depended upon closing every avenue into Flanders, when they were contemplating a march to Paris. The plan of the Republicans consisted in a series of attacks on the posts and corps forming the long cordon of the Allies, followed by a serious advance of the two wings, the one towards Philipville, the other towards Dunkirk. On the 26th April, the movement in advance took place along the whole line. The centre, which advanced against the Duke of York near Cambray, experienced the most bloody reverses. When the Republicans arrived at the redoubts of Troisville, defended by the Duke of York, they were vigorously received by the English guards in front, supported by PRINCE SCHWARTZENBERG, afterwards so well known as generalissimo of the Allied forces, commanding a regiment of Austrian cuirassiers; while General Otto assailed them in flank at the head of the English cavalry, led by the 15th hussars, which drove headlong through their whole line by a most brilliant charge, and completed their rout. Not in the whole Peninsular war was a more splendid display of the power of cavalry made than on this occasion; if it had been followed up with vigour, the French army would have been totally defeated. As it was, the whole centre was driven back in confusion to Cambray, with the loss of thirty-five pieces of cannon, and above four thousand men. While this disaster was experienced on the left centre of the French army, their right centre was not more successful. That portion of them at first gained some advantage over the corps of the Austrians, who there composed the covering force; but the latter having been reinforced, and supported by a numerous artillery, resumed the offensive, and repulsed the assailants with great loss.¹

¹ *Jom. v. 55,*
57. Ann.
Reg. p. 329.
Th. vi. 286,
287.

34.
Defeat of
Clairfait,
April 25.

But these advantages, how considerable soever, were counterbalanced by a severe check experienced by General Clairfait, whose corps formed the extreme right of the allied line. On that side the Republicans had assembled fifty thousand men under Souham and Moreau, which, on the 25th April, advanced against the Austrian forces. Assailed by superior numbers, Clairfait was driven back to Tournay, with the loss of thirty pieces of cannon, and

twelve hundred prisoners. His retreat seemed to render wholly desperate the situation of a brigade of three thousand Hanoverians, now shut up in Menin, and soon furiously bombarded. But their brave commander, supported by the resolution of a large body of French emigrants who were attached to his corps, resolved to cut his way through the besiegers, and, through the heroic valour of his followers, successfully accomplished his object. Prince Cobourg, upon the intelligence of this misfortune, detached the Duke of York to Tournay to support Clairfait, and remained with the rest of his forces in the neighbourhood of Landrecy, to put that place in a state of defence.¹

Convinced by the failure of their attacks on the centre of the Allies, that their forces were insufficient in that quarter, the Committee of Public Salvation, relying on the inactivity and lukewarmness of the Prussians on the extreme right, took the energetic resolution of ordering Jourdan to reinforce the army of the Moselle with fifteen thousand men drawn from the Rhine, and after leaving a corps of observation at Luxembourg, to march with forty-five thousand men upon the Ardenne forest, and unite himself to the army on the Sambre. This bold conception of strengthening to an overwhelming degree, what appeared the decisive point of the long line of operations, and throwing ninety thousand men on the extreme left of the enemy, had a most important effect on the future fate of the campaign; and formed a striking contrast to the measures of the Allies, who deemed themselves insecure, even when meditating offensive operations, unless the whole avenues of the country they occupied were equally guarded by detached corps. The defection of Prussia, which daily became more evident, prevented them from obtaining any co-operation on the left flank to counteract this change in the enemy's line of attack, while, even in their own part of the line, the movements were vacillating, and totally unworthy of the splendid force at their disposal. On the 10th May, Clairfait, without any co-operation from the other parts of the line, crossed the Lys, and attacked the Republican troops around the town of Cambray. An obstinate engagement ensued, with various success, which was continued on the succeeding day, without any decisive advantage having been gained by either

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¹ Journ. v. 61,
62. Th. vi.
288, 289.

35.
Jourdan
ordered up
from the
Rhine to the
Sambre.

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¹ Th. vi. 290.
Jom. v. 62,
63. Hard.
ii. 532.

party. Four thousand men were lost on each side, and the opposing forces remained much where they had been at their commencement; a striking proof of the murderous and indecisive nature of this warfare of posts, which, without any adequate success, occasioned an incessant consumption of human life.¹

36.
Indecisive
actions on
the Sambre
which at
length ter-
minate to
the disad-
vantage of
the French.

But the period was now approaching when the genius of Carnot was to infuse a new element into this indecisive warfare. On the 10th May, the French army on the Sambre crossed that river, with the design of executing his plan of operations; but the Allies having collected their forces to cover the important city of Mons, and taken post at a fortified position at Grandrengs, a furious battle ensued, which terminated in the Republicans being defeated and driven across the same river with the loss of ten pieces of cannon, and four thousand men. But the French having remained masters of their bridges over the river, and being urged by St Just and Le Bas, who threatened their generals with the guillotine if they were not victorious, again crossed on the 20th, and returned to the charge. But they kept so bad a look-out, that, on the 24th, they were surprised and completely routed by the Austrians, under Prince Kaunitz. The whole army was flying in confusion to the bridges, when KLEBER, destined to future celebrity, arrived in time with fresh troops to arrest the victorious enemy, and preserve his army from total destruction. As it was, however, they were a second time driven over the Sambre, with the loss of four thousand men, and twenty-five pieces of artillery.²

May 24.
² Jom. v. 66,
79, 83, 85.
Toul. iv.
320, 322.
Th. vi. 291,
292. Ann.
Reg. 331.

37.
Prepara-
tions for a
general bat-
tle in West
Flanders.

While blood was flowing in such torrents on the banks of the Sambre, events of still greater importance occurred in West Flanders. The Allies had there collected ninety thousand men, including one hundred and thirty-three squadrons under the immediate command of the Emperor; and the situation of the left wing of the French suggested the design of cutting it off from the main body of the army, and forcing it back upon the sea, where it could have no alternative but to surrender. For this purpose, their troops were divided into six columns, which were moved by concentric lines on the French corps posted at Turcoing. Had they acted with more concert, and moved on a better line, the attack would have been crowned with the most

splendid success. But the old system of dividing their forces, made it terminate in nothing but disaster. The different columns, some of which were separated from each other by no less than twenty leagues, did not arrive simultaneously at the point of attack : and although each singly acted vigorously when brought into action, there was not the unity in their operations requisite to success. Some inconsiderable advantages were gained near Turcoing on the 17th ; but the Republicans having now concentrated their troops in a central position, were enabled to fall with an overwhelming force on the insulated columns of their adversaries.¹

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1794.

May 16.

¹ Jom. v. 86,
97. Toul.
iv. 322.
Ann. Reg.
332.

At three in the morning of the 18th, General Souham, with forty-five thousand, attacked the detached corps of General Otto and the Duke of York, while another corps of fifteen thousand advanced against them from the side of Lisle. The first, that of General Otto, was defeated with great loss ; the latter, though it at first defended itself with vigour, finding its communication cut off with the remainder of the army, and surrounded by a greatly superior force, disbanded and took to flight ; a circumstance which ultimately proved fortunate, as, had they maintained their ground, they certainly would have been made prisoners. So sudden was the rout, that the Duke of York himself owed his safety to the fleetness of his horse ; a circumstance which, much to his credit, he had the candour to admit in his official despatch. Such was the defect of the combinations of Prince Cobourg, that at the time that his central columns were thus overwhelmed by an enormous mass of sixty thousand men, the two columns on the left, amounting to not less than thirty thousand, under the Archduke Charles and Kinsky, remained in a state of absolute inaction. At the same time Clairfait, with seventeen thousand on the right, who came up too late to take any active part in the engagement, was obliged to retire, after capturing seven pieces of cannon ; a poor compensation for the total rout of the centre, and the moral disadvantages of a defeat. In this action, where the Allies lost three thousand men, and sixty pieces of cannon, the superiority of the French generalship was very apparent. Inferior, upon the whole, to the mass of their opponents, they had greatly the advantage in numbers at the point of attack ;² but after

38.
Battle of
Turcoing.
May 18.

² Jom. v. 96,
97, 98.
Toul. iv.
322. Ann.
Reg. 332.
Th. vi. 296,
296. Hard.
ii. 536-7.

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39.
Fresh inde-
cisive ac-
tions.
May 22.

having pierced the centre, they should have reaped something more from their victory than the bare possession of the field of battle.*

On the 22d May Pichegru, who now assumed the command, renewed the attack, with a force now raised by successive additions to nearly one hundred thousand men, with the intention of forcing the passage of the Scheldt, besieging Tournay, and capturing a convoy which was ascending that river. They at first succeeded in driving in the outposts; but a reinforcement of English troops, commanded by General Fox, and seven Austrian battalions, having arrived to support the Hanoverians in that quarter, a desperate and bloody conflict ensued, in which the firmness of the English at length prevailed over the impetuosity of their adversaries, and the village of Pont-à-chin, which was the point of contest between them, finally remained in their hands. The battle continued from five in the morning till nine at night, when it terminated by a general charge of the Allies, which drove the enemy from the field.* In this battle, which was one of the most obstinately contested of the campaign, the French lost above six thousand men; but such was the fatigue of the victors, after an engagement of such severity and duration, that they were unable to follow up their success. Twenty thousand men had fallen on the two sides in these murderous battles, but no decisive advantage, and hardly a foot of ground, had been gained by either party. Finding that he could make no impression in this quarter, Pichegru resolved to carry the theatre of war into West Flanders, where the country, intersected by hedges, was less favourable to the allied cavalry, and he, in consequence, laid siege to Ipres. About the same time, the Emperor conducted ten thousand men in person to reinforce the army on the Sambre, and the right wing of the Allies, thus weakened, remained in a defensive position near Tournay, which was fortified with the utmost care.¹

The indecisive results of these bloody actions, which clearly demonstrated the great strength of the Republi-

¹ Jom. v. 98,
104. Toul.
iv. 322.
Ann. Reg.
333. Th. vi.
297. Hard.
ii. 537, 538.

* The Emperor Francis was on horseback for twelve hours during this bloody day, incessantly traversing the ranks, and animating the soldiers to continue their exertions.—“Courage, my friends!” said he, when they appeared about to sink: “yet a few more exertions, and the victory is our own.”—HARD. ii. 538.

cans, and the desperate strife which awaited the Allies, in any attempt to conquer a country abounding in such defenders, produced an important change in the Austrian councils. Thugut, who was essentially patriotic in his ideas, and reluctantly embarked in any contest which did not evidently conduce to the advantage of the hereditary states, had long nourished a secret aversion to the war in Flanders. He could not disguise from himself that these provinces, how opulent and important soever in themselves, contributed little to the real strength of the monarchy: that their situation, far removed from Austria, and close to France, rendered it highly probable that they would, at some no very distant period, become the prey of that enterprising power; and that the charge of defending them at so great a distance from the strength of the hereditary states, entailed an enormous and ruinous expense upon the Imperial finances. Impressed with these ideas, he had for some time been revolving in his mind the project of abandoning these distant provinces to their fate, and looking out for a compensation to Austria in Italy or Bavaria, where its new acquisition might lie adjacent to the hereditary states. This long remained a fixed principle in the Imperial councils; and in these vague ideas is to be found the remote cause of the treaty of Campo-Formio, and partition of Venice.¹

Two days after the battle of Turcoing, a council of state was secretly held at the Imperial headquarters, to deliberate on the measures to be pursued for the future progress of the war. The opportunity appeared favourable to that able statesman to bring forward his long-cherished project. The inactivity and lukewarmness of the Prussians, notwithstanding the English subsidy, too plainly demonstrated that no reliance could be placed on their co-operation; the recent desperate actions in West Flanders sufficiently proved that no serious impression was to be made in that quarter; while the reluctance of the Flemish states to contribute any thing to the common cause, and the evident partiality of a large party amongst them for the French alliance, rendered it a matter of great doubt whether it was expedient on behalf of such distant, fickle, and disaffected subjects to maintain any longer a contest,

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40.

The Austrian Cabinet in secret contemplate the exchange of Flanders for Bavaria, or some Italian province.

¹ Hard. ii.
539, 540.

41.

A Council of State is held on this project.
May 24.

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which, if unsuccessful, might engulf half the forces of the monarchy. These considerations were forcibly impressed upon the mind of the young Emperor, who, born and bred in Tuscany, entertained no partiality for his distant Flemish possessions; Mack supported them with all the weight of his opinion, and strongly "urged that it was better to retire altogether across the Rhine, while yet the strength of the army was unbroken, than run the risk of its being buried in the fields of Belgium. If Flanders was of such value to the cause of European independence, it lay upon England, Prussia, and Holland, in the centre of whose dominions it lay, to provide measures for its defence: but the real interests of Austria lay nearer home, and her battalions required to be seen in dense array on the Maritime Alps, or on the shores of the Vistula, where vast and fertile provinces were about to fall a prey to her ambitious neighbours. Should affairs in that quarter assume a favourable aspect, and the revolutionary fervour of the Republic exhaust itself, it would apparently be no difficult matter to recover the Belgic provinces, as Prince Cobourg had done in the preceding campaign; or, if this should unhappily prove impossible, it was much more likely that a successful defensive war could be maintained with the resources of the empire concentrated round its heart, than when they were so largely accumulated in a distant possession; or if peace became desirable, it could at any time be readily purchased by the cession of provinces so valuable to France, and the acquisition of an equivalent nearer the Austrian dominions."¹

¹ Hard. ii.
539, 543.

42.
The abandon-
ment of
Flanders is
resolved on
by the Aus-
trian Cabi-
net.

² Hard. ii.
539, 543,
545.

The subject was debated with the deliberation which its importance deserved; and it was at length determined by the majority of the council that the maintenance of so burdensome and hazardous a war for such disaffected and distant possessions, was at variance with the vital interests of the State. It was resolved, accordingly, that the Imperial troops should, as soon as decency would permit, be withdrawn from Flanders; that this resolution should in the mean time be kept a profound secret, and, to cover the honour of the Imperial arms, a general battle should be hazarded, and on its issue should depend the course which should thereafter be adopted;² but that in the mean time

the Emperor should forthwith depart for Vienna, to take cognisance of the affairs of Poland, which called for instant attention. In conformity with this resolution he set out shortly after for that capital, leaving Cobourg in command of the army.

Meanwhile the Commissioners of the Convention, little anticipating the favourable turn which their affairs were about to take from the divisions of the Allies, nothing daunted by the reverses the army of the Sambre had experienced, were continually stimulating its generals to fresh exertions. In vain they represented, that the soldiers, worn out with fatigue, without shoes, without clothing, stood much in need of repose; "To-morrow," said St Just, "the Republic must have a victory; choose between a battle and a siege." Constrained by authorities who enforced their arguments by the guillotine, the Republican generals prepared for a third expedition across the Sambre. Towards the end of May, Kleber made the attempt with troops still exhausted by fatigue, and almost starving. The consequences were such as might have been expected; the grenadiers were repulsed by the grape-shot of the enemy, and General Duhesme was routed with little difficulty. On the 29th, however, the indomitable Republicans returned to the charge, and after an obstinate engagement, succeeded in forcing back the Imperialists, and immediately began the investment of Charleroi. But the arrival of the Emperor with ten thousand troops, having raised the allied force in that quarter to thirty-five thousand men, it was resolved to make an effort to raise the siege before Jourdan arrived with the army of the Moselle, which was hourly expected. The attack was made on the 3d June, and attended with complete success; the French having been driven across the Sambre, with the loss of two thousand men. But this check was of little importance: on the day following Jourdan arrived from the Moselle with forty thousand fresh troops.¹

This great reinforcement thrown into the scale, when the contending parties were so nearly balanced, was decisive of the fate of the campaign, and proves the sagacity with which Carnot acted in accumulating an overwhelming force on this point. In a few days the Republicans recrossed the river with sixty thousand men, resumed

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43.
French again cross the Sambre, invest Charleroi, and are driven back.
May 28.

June 3.
1 Toul. iv.
322. Jour.
v. 103, 109,
113.

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44.

Arrival of
Jourdan
with 40,000
men, invest-
ment of
Charleroi,
and separa-
tion of the
Austrians
and English.
June 12.
June 16.

the siege of Charleroi, and soon destroyed a strong redoubt which constituted the principal defence of the besieged. The imminent danger to which the city was reduced by the attack of this great force, induced the Allies to make the utmost efforts to raise the siege. But this required no less skill than intrepidity: for their army did not exceed thirty-five thousand men, while the French were nearly double that number. On this occasion, the system of attack by detached columns, was for once successful. The Republicans were pierced by a simultaneous effort of two of the allied columns defeated, and driven over the Sambre, with the loss of three thousand men. This success, highly honourable as it was to the Austrian arms, proved in the end prejudicial to their cause, as it induced Prince Cobourg to suppose that his left wing was now sufficiently secure, and to detach all his disposable troops to the succour of Clairfait and Ipres on the right, whereas it was against the other flank that the principal forces of the Republicans were now directed. In effect, on the 18th June, the French army recrossed the Sambre for the fifth, and commenced the bombardment of Charleroi for the third time. The great force with which this attack was made, amounting to seventy thousand men, rendered it evident that Prince Cobourg had mistaken the point which required support, and that it was on the Sambre, and under the walls of Charleroi, that the decisive battle for the protection of Flanders was to be fought. Accordingly, the major part of the Allied forces were at length moved in that direction; the Duke of York, with the English and Hanoverians, being left alone on the Scheldt, at a short distance from Clairfait, who had recently experienced the most overwhelming reverses. This separation of the forces of the two nations contributed not a little to augment the misunderstanding which already prevailed between them, and was the forerunner of numberless disasters to all.¹

No sooner was the departure of the Emperor with reinforcements to the army on the Sambre known to Pichegru, than he resolved to take advantage of the weakness of his adversaries, by prosecuting seriously the long-menaced siege of Ipres. Clairfait, not feeling himself in sufficient strength to interrupt his operations, remained firm in his

1794. v.
134, 133.
Th. vi. 395,
397. Ann.
Reg. 333.

45.
Pichegru
attacks
Clairfait.

intrenched camp at Thielt. An attempted movement of the centre of the Allied army to his support, having been betrayed to the enemy at Lisle, was prevented from being carried into effect by a demonstration from the French centre by Pichegru. The consequence was, that the Austrian general was compelled to attack alone; and though his corps fought with their wonted valour, he was again worsted, and compelled to resume his position in his intrenchments, without having disturbed the operations of the siege. This was the fifth time that this brave officer had fought unsupported, while thirty thousand Austrians lay inactive at Tournay, and six thousand English were reposeing from the fatigues of their sea voyage at Ostend. The consequence was, that Ipres capitulated a few days after, and its garrison, consisting of six thousand men, was made prisoners of war. Cobourg made a tardy movement for its relief, but hearing of its fall, returned on the 19th to Tournay.¹

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1794.

June 17.
1 *Jom. v.*
119, 130.
Ann. Reg.
324.

The Austrians having now, in pursuance of their plan of withdrawing from Flanders, finally detached themselves from the English, moved all their forces towards their left wing, with a view to succour Charleroi, which was severely pressed by Jourdan. On the 22d Prince Cobourg joined his left wing, but though the united forces were seventy-five thousand strong, he delayed till the 26th to attack the French army. Jourdan, who was fully aware of the importance of acquiring this fortress, took advantage of the respite which this delay afforded him to prosecute the siege with the utmost activity. This he did with such success, that, the batteries of the besieged having been silenced, the place capitulated on the evening of the 25th. Hardly had the garrison left the gates, when the discharge of artillery announced the tardy movement of the Austrians for its relief. The battle took place on the following day, on the plains of FLEURUS, already signalled by a victory of Marshal Luxembourg in 1690, and was one of the most important in the whole war.²

46.
Imperialists
assemble to
succour
Charleroi.
June 22.

June 25.

June 26.
2 *Jom. v.*
119, 130.
Ann. Reg.
334. Th.
vi. 393, 396,
396.

The French army, which was eighty-nine thousand strong, was posted in a semicircle round the town of Charleroi, now become, instead of a source of weakness, a *point d'appui* to the Republicans. Their position nearly resembled that of Napoleon at Leipsic; but the superiority

47.
Battle of
Fleurus.
June 26.

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of force on that occasion, secured a very different result to the Allies from that which now awaited their arms. The Imperialists, adhering to their system of attacking the enemy at all points, divided their forces into five columns, intending to assail at the same moment all parts of the Republican position; a mode of attack at all times hazardous, but especially so when an inferior is engaged with a superior force. The battle commenced on the 26th, at daybreak, and continued with great vigour throughout the whole day. The first column, under the command of the Prince of Orange, attacked the left of the French under General Montaign, and drove them back to the village of Fontaine Lévêque; but the Republicans being there reinforced by fresh troops, succeeded in maintaining their ground, and repulsed the repeated charges of the Imperial cavalry. During a successful charge, however, the French horse were themselves assailed by the Austrian cuirassiers, and driven back in confusion upon the infantry, who gradually lost ground, and at length were compelled to fall back to the heights in front of Charleroi. The moment was critical, for the Austrians, following up their success, were on the point of carrying the village of Marchiennes-au-Point, which would have intercepted the whole communications of the Republican army; but Jourdan, alarmed at the advance of the enemy in this quarter, moved up Kleber to support his left. That intrepid general hastily erected several batteries to meet the enemy's fire, and moved forward BERNADOTTE,* the future King of Sweden, at the head of several battalions, to the support of Montaign. The Allies, under Latour and the Prince of Orange, being unsupported by the remainder of the army, and finding themselves vigorously assailed both in front and flank, fell back from their advanced position, and before four in the afternoon, all the ground gained in that quarter had been abandoned.¹

While these events were going forward on the left, the centre, where the village of Fleurus was occupied by sixteen thousand troops, and strongly strengthened by intrenchments, was the scene of an obstinate conflict. The attack in front of the Allies was successfully repulsed

¹ Jom. v.
133, 143.
Toul. iv.
328, 330.
Th. vi. 399,
401.

48.
Obstinate
struggle in
the centre.

* See a biography of BERNADOTTE, c. 70, § 26.

after passing the village, by the fire of artillery on the heights in the rear: but General Beaulieu, with the left wing of the Allies, having attacked and carried the post of Lambusart on the French right, the Republicans on the left were compelled to give way; and the important post of Fleurus, with its great redoubt, stood prominent in the midst of the allied forces, exposed to attack both in front and flank. The consequence of this was, that the great redoubt was on the point of being taken, and the French divisions in the centre were already in full retreat, when Jourdan hastened to the scene of danger with six battalions, who were formed in close columns, and checked the advance of the enemy. The French cavalry, under Dubois, made a furious charge upon the Imperial infantry, overthrew them, and captured fifty pieces of cannon: but being disordered by their rapid advance, they were immediately after attacked by the Austrian cuirassiers, who not only routed the victors, but retook the whole artillery, and drove them back in confusion upon their own lines.¹

Meanwhile the allied left, under Beaulieu, made the most brilliant progress. After various attacks, the village of Lambusart was carried, and the enemy's forces, for the most part, driven across the Sambre; but the vigorous fire of the French artillery prevented the Allies from debouching from the village, or obtaining complete success in that quarter. As it was, however, the situation of the Republicans was disadvantageous in every quarter. The right, under Moreau, was driven back, and in great part had recrossed the river; the left, under Montaign, had abandoned the field of battle, and almost entirely gone over to the other bank; while the forces in the centre had been in part compelled to recede, and the great redoubt was in danger of being carried. Four divisions only, those of Lefebvre, Championnet, Kleber, and Daurier, were in a condition to make head against the enemy; when Cobourg, hearing of the fall of Charleroi, and fettered by the secret instructions he had received to risk as little as possible before retiring from Flanders, ordered a retreat at all points. Without detracting from the merit of Jourdan, it may safely be affirmed, that if the Prince of Orange, instead of drawing back his wing when he found it too far advanced,² had united with the centre to

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¹ Jom. v.
145, 146,
149. Toul.
iv. 332.
Th. vi. 401.

49.
Success of
the Austrians
on the
left.

² Jom. v.
150, 152.
Th. vi. 401,
402. Toul.
iv. 332.

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attack Fleurus and the main body of the French army, while Beaulieu pressed them on the other side, the success would have been rendered complete, and a glorious victory achieved.

50.
Allies re-
treat though
not defeated.

But nothing is so perilous as to evince any symptoms of vacillation after a general engagement. The battle of Fleurus was, in fact, a drawn battle; the loss on both sides was nearly equal, being between four thousand and five thousand men to each side; the French had given way on both wings, the centre with difficulty maintained its ground; and the Imperialists only retreated because the fall of Charleroi had removed the object for which they fought, and the secret instructions of their general precluded him from adopting any course, how brilliant and inviting soever, which promised to be attended with any hazard to the army. Nevertheless, it was attended with the most disastrous consequences. The loss of Flanders immediately followed a contest which an enterprising general would have converted into the most decisive triumph. Cobourg retired to Nivelles, and soon after took post at Mont St Jean and Waterloo, at the entrance of the forest of Soignies, little dreaming of the glorious event which, under a firmer commander, and with the forces of a very differently united alliance, was there destined to counterbalance all the evils of which his prescribed retreat formed the commencement. Two days afterwards, the French issued from their intrenchments round Charleroi, and at Mount Pallu defeated the allied rearguard, which fell back to Braine le Comte. Mons

July 6 and 9. was shortly after evacuated, and the Allies, abandoning the whole fortresses which they had conquered to their own resources, drew together in front of Brussels. Several actions took place in the beginning of July, between the rearguard of the Allies and the French columns at Mont St Jean, Braine la Leude, and Sambre; but, at length, finding himself unable to maintain his position without concentrating his forces, Prince Cobourg abandoned Brussels, and fell back behind the Dyle.¹

¹ Jom. v.
152, 162.
Toul. iv.
336. Hard.
lit. 23, 24.
Th. vi. 405,
406.

It was not without the most strenuous exertions of the British government to prevent them, that these ruinous divisions broke out among the allied powers in Flanders. Immediately after the treaty of 19th April was signed,

Lord Malmesbury, the English ambassador, set out from the Hague for Maestricht, where conferences were opened with the Prussian minister Haugwitz, and the Dutch plenipotentiaries. Their object was to induce the Prussian forces to leave the banks of the Rhine, and hasten to the scene of decisive operations in Flanders. These demands were so reasonable, and so strictly in unison with the letter as well as spirit of the recent treaty, that the Prussian minister could not avoid agreeing to them, and engaged to procure orders from the cabinet of Berlin to that effect. But Moellendorf, acting in obedience to secret orders from his court, declined to obey the requisition of the plenipotentiaries, and engaged in a fruitless and feigned expedition towards Kayserslautern and Sarre Louis, at the very time that he was well aware that his antagonist, Jourdan, with forty thousand men, was hastening by forced marches to the decisive point on the banks of the Sambre. When the danger became more threatening, and the Emperor himself had repaired to the neighbourhood of Charleroi, to make head against the accumulating masses of the Republicans, the same requisitions were renewed in a still more pressing strain by the English and Dutch ministers.* But it was all in vain. The Prussian General betook himself to one subterfuge after another, alleging that, by menacing Sarre Louis and Landau, he succoured the common cause more effectually than if he brought his whole forces to the walls of Charleroi, and at length, when driven from that pretext, he peremptorily refused to leave the banks of the Rhine. The ministers of the maritime powers upon this broke out into bitter complaints at the breach of faith on the part of the Prussian government, and reproached the marshal with a fact which they had recently discovered, that, instead of sixty-two thousand men stipulated by the treaty, and paid for by the Allies, only thirty-two thousand received daily rations at the army. The bad faith of the Prussians was now apparent; they were reproached with it. Moellendorf denied the charge; recriminations issued on both sides;¹ at length they

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51.

Efforts of
the British
government
to hold to-
gether the
alliance.

¹ Hard. ii.
545, 547;
and iii. 5, 6,
7 Malmes.
Disp. ii. 7.

* "It is not for nothing," said Lord Cornwallis and Kinckel, the Dutch minister, "that we pay you our subsidies, nor in order that the subsidised power should employ the paid forces for its own purposes. If the Prussian troops do not act for the common cause, they depart from the chief object of the treaty."—HARD. iii. 65

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52.
Pichegru
drives back
Clairfait in
West Fland-
ers, and
advances to
Brussels.

July 10.

¹ *Jom. v.*
155, 162.
Th. vi. 406.
Toul. iv.
334, 335.

53.
Views of
the Cabinet
of Vienna at
this period.

separated mutually exasperated; and Lord Cornwallis declared he would suspend the payment of the British subsidy.

After the departure of Cobourg from Tournay, the Allies strove in vain to make head against the superior forces of the Republicans in maritime Flanders. Tournay was evacuated; and while Pichegru himself marched upon Ghent to force back Clairfait, he detached Moreau with a considerable force to form the siege of the places bordering on the ocean. Nieuport capitulated, Fort Ecluse, the key of the Scheldt, was blockaded, and the island of Cadsand overrun by the Republicans, who crossed the arm of the sea which separates it from the mainland by swimming. Clairfait, although reinforced by six thousand English, who had rapidly marched from Ostend, under Lord Moira, found himself unable to make head against Pichegru; the old German tactics of carrying on war by a series of positions, which succeeded against the inconsiderable forces of Prussia, even when guided by the genius of Frederick, totally failed when opposed to the vehement ardour and inexhaustible numbers of the Revolutionary armies. After in vain attempting, in conjunction with Cobourg, to cover Brussels, he was compelled to fall back behind the Dyle; while the Duke of York also retired in the same direction, and encamped between Malines and Louvain. The retreat of the allied forces enabled the victorious armies of Pichegru and Jourdan to unite their forces at Brussels, where they met on the 10th July. And thus, by a series of energetic movements and glorious contests, were two armies, which a short time before had left the extremities of the vast line extending from Philipville to Dunkirk, enabled to unite their victorious forces for the occupation of the capital of Flanders.¹

The Austrian cabinet at that period entertained serious thoughts of peace. The opinion was very general on the Continent, that the fearful energy and bloody proscriptions of Robespierre had considerably calmed the effervescence of the Revolution, and that his stern and relentless hand was alone adequate to restrain its excesses and restore any thing like a regular government at Paris. These ideas received a strong confirmation from the speech which he delivered on occasion of the fête of the Supreme Being; it

was known that he had moderated many of the energetic plans of foreign invasion projected by Carnot, and that his brother had used his influence to preserve Piedmont and the north of Italy from an incursion, at a time when the Allies were little in a condition to have resisted it. The Imperial government was really desirous of an accommodation, in order to concentrate their armies and attention upon Poland, which was hourly approaching the crisis of its fate; and a large force had already entered Galicia, where they professed their intention of coming as deliverers, and were received with open arms by the people of that province. Unable to bear, any more than Prussia, the weight of a double contest on the Rhine and the Vistula, and, deeming the latter more material to the interests of the monarchy than the former, they had definitively determined at Vienna on the abandonment of the Belgian provinces, and were now only desirous of extricating themselves from a contest in which neither honour nor profit was to be gained. A secret understanding in consequence took place between Cobourg and the French generals, the conditions of which were, that the Austrians should not be disquieted in their retreat to the Rhine, and the Republicans permitted, without molestation, to reduce the four great fortresses which had been wrested from France in the preceding and present campaign. The fall of Robespierre prevented these overtures from coming to any further issue; but they early attracted the attention of the vigilant minister who directed the affairs of Great Britain, and he urged his ambassador to make the strongest remonstrances against a step so prejudicial to the interests of Europe. But the Austrians were resolute in their determination to abandon Flanders, alleging as a reason the inconstancy and disaffection of its inhabitants. "To behold a people so infatuated," said Count METTERNICH, afterwards so celebrated as the great diplomatic leader, to Lord Cornwallis, "as, notwithstanding the most pressing exhortations to take up arms in defence of their religion, their independence, and property, to refuse to move, and voluntarily place their necks under the yoke, singing ¹ *Hard. III.* 7, 33. *On Ira*, is a phenomenon reserved for these days of desolation."¹

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54.
Diverging
retreat of
the English
and Austri-
an forces.
English re-
tire towards
Holland.

The English forces, now entirely detached from their allies, were posted behind the canal of Malines, and they amounted to above thirty thousand British and Hanoverians, and fifteen thousand Dutch. Their object was, by remaining on the defensive, to cover Antwerp and Holland: while the Austrians retired by Tirlemont upon Liege. In this way, while the Republicans remained with their centre at Brussels, and their wings extending from Wilworde to Namur, their adversaries retired by *diverging* lines towards the north and the south, and every successive day's march carried them farther from each other; a state of affairs of all others the most calamitous, in presence of an enterprising enemy, occupying a central position between them. The English were intent only on covering Antwerp and Holland; the Imperialists on drawing nearer to their resources at Cologne and Coblenz. Neither recollected that, by separating their forces, they gave the enemy the means of crushing either separately at pleasure, and left him in possession of a salient position, which would soon render both the provinces of the Lower Rhine and the United Provinces untenable.¹

¹ *Jom. v. 162, 170. Toul. iv. 338.*

55.
Inactivity of
the French.

Contrary to all expectation, and in opposition to what might have been expected from the previous energy of their measures, the Committee of Public Salvation arrested their army in the career of victory, and paralysed a hundred and fifty thousand men in possession of an internal line of communication, at the moment when their enemies were disunited and incapable of rendering each other any assistance. This was the result of the secret understanding with Prince Cobourg, which has just been mentioned. On the 15th July, the canal of Malines was forced, after an inconsiderable resistance by the Dutch troops, and the Duke of York retired to Antwerp, which was soon after evacuated, and his whole forces concentrated towards Breda for the defence of Holland. On the other wing, Jourdan, more in appearance than reality, pursued his *advantages* against Cobourg; and after several inconsiderable engagements with the rearguard, Liege and Tongres were evacuated, and the Austrians retired behind the Meuse.² But with these exceptions nothing was attempted by the Republicans for several weeks, while the govern-

² *Toul. iv. 338. Jom. v. 162, 165, 170, 174.*

ment waited the reduction of Valenciennes and the other places captured by the Allies on the frontier at the commencement of the war.

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To hasten their reduction, a bloody decree was passed by the Convention, ordaining their commanders to give no quarter to any garrison which should not surrender within twenty-four hours after the first summons.¹ The humanity of the Republican generals made them refuse to carry this atrocious order into execution, and it was soon after rendered nugatory by the fall of Robespierre on the 27th July, (9th Thermidor.) The governor of Condé, when summoned to surrender in virtue of this disgraceful injunction to the French generals, replied, "That one nation had no right to decree the dishonour of another;" and the Committee of Public Salvation, under Carnot's direction, feeling the iniquity of the measure, took advantage of fictitious delays to allow the garrisons to capitulate on the usual terms. General Scherer collected a body of troops from the interior and the neighbouring garrisons, and formed the siege successively of Landrecy, Quesnoy, Condé, and Valenciennes, all of which fell, after a trifling resistance, before the end of August. At the same time the decree already mentioned was passed by the Convention, prohibiting their armies from giving quarter to the English or Hanoverians who might fall into their hands. "Republican soldiers," said Barère, in the report on which that decree was founded, "you must, when victory shall put into your power either English or Hanoverians, strike without mercy; not one of them ought to return to the traitorous territory of England, or to be brought into France. Let the English slaves perish, but let Europe be free." To this decree the Duke of York replied, by an order of the day, worthy of the nation whose forces he led, and the cause with which he was intrusted, ordering all French captives to be treated with the same humanity as before.*¹ This generous con-

56.
Decree of
the Conven-
tion to give
no quart r.
1 Decree,
May 26.

1 Moniteur,
29th May.
Hist. Parl.
May 30.
Ann. Reg.
145. His-
tory. Th.
vii. 74.
Toul. iv.
338. Jom.
v. 172.
Vide Ante,
ii. c. 15, 30.

* He stated in that noble document, "The National Convention has just passed a decree that their soldiers shall give no quarter to the British or Hanoverian troops. His Royal Highness anticipates the indignation and horror which has naturally arisen in the minds of the brave troops whom he addresses upon receiving this information. He desires, however, to remind them, that mercy to the vanquished is the brightest gem in the soldier's character, and exhorts them not to suffer their resentment to lead them to any precipitate act of cruelty on their part, which may sully the

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duct had the desired effect; the humane efforts of the English commanders were seconded by the corresponding feelings of the French officers, and the prisoners on both sides were treated with the same humanity as before the issuing of the bloody decree.

57.
Operations
on the
Rhine, and
disasters
consequent
on the suc-
cession of
Prussia.

While the fortune of war, after a desperate struggle, was thus decisively inclining to the Republican side on the northern, events of minor importance, but still upon the whole favourable to the French arms, occurred on the eastern and southern frontiers. The dubious conduct, or rather evident defection of Prussia, paralysed all the operations on the Rhine. Sixty thousand Prussians and Saxons were assembled round Mayence, and along the Nahe; and the departure of Jourdan, with forty thousand, to reinforce the army on the Sambre, offered the fairest opportunity of resuming offensive operations with a preponderating force on the Moselle. Only two divisions at a distance from each other remained between Thionville and Kayserslautern; and though the Republican government made the greatest exertions to reinforce them, the utmost that could be done was to raise the one to twenty, and the other to ten thousand men. Nor was the superiority less decisive on the Upper Rhine, where fifty thousand Imperialists formed the cordon from Bâle to Mayence; and seventy thousand more were prepared for active operations; while the force in the field under General Michaud, to oppose them, was only thirty-six thousand, supported by fifty thousand still retained in garrison by the cautious policy of the French government.¹

Yet, with this immense superiority of force, the Allies

reputation they have acquired in the world. In all the wars which, from the earliest times, have existed between the English and French nations, they have been accustomed to consider each other in the light of generous as well as brave enemies; while the Hanoverians, the allies of the former, have shared for above a century in this mutual esteem. Humanity and kindness have at all times taken place, the instant that opposition ceased, and the same cloak has been frequently seen covering those who were wounded, friends and enemies, while indiscriminately conveyed to the hospitals of the conquerors. The British and Hanoverian armies will not believe that the French nation, even under their present infatuation, can so far forget their character as soldiers, as to pay any attention to a decree as injurious to themselves, as it is disgraceful to their government; and therefore his Royal Highness trusts that the soldiers of both nations will confine their sentiments of abhorrence to the National Convention alone, persuaded that they will be joined in them by every Frenchman who possesses one spark of honour, or one principle of a soldier."—*Proclamation, May 30, 1794; Ann. Reg. 1794; State Papers, p. 169.*

¹ St Cyr, ii.
232, 250.
Join. v. 177,
184.

in this quarter did nothing. Instead of assembling, as they might easily have done, eighty thousand men, to attack the centre of the French lines on the Rhine, and relieve the pressure which operated so severely on the Sambre, they contented themselves with detaching a small force to dislodge the Republican post at Morlautern. A slight advantage was gained at Kayserslautern over the Republican division intrusted with the defence of the gorges; and General Michaud, unable to make head against such superior forces, retired to the intrenchments of the Queich, while the army of the Moselle resumed the position it had occupied at the close of the preceding campaign. Shortly after, Michaud received powerful reinforcements, and made vigorous preparations for resuming the offensive; while the British ambassador vainly endeavoured to stimulate the King of Prussia to execute the part assigned him in the treaty of the Hague. The whole attention of Prussia was fixed on Poland, and the movements of General Kosciasko; and nothing could induce its government to give any directions for the prosecution of the war on the Rhine, till after the fall of Charleroi, the battle of Fleurus, and the reinforcement of the Republican armies on the Rhine, had rendered it impossible to resume the offensive with any prospect of advantage.¹

In the south, the reduction of Lyons and Toulon, by rendering disposable the forces employed in the siege of these cities, gave an early and decisive superiority to the Republican arms. The levies ordered in September 1793, had brought such an accession of strength to their forces, that in the middle of April the army of the Alps amounted to seventy-five thousand combatants. Piedmont, menaced with invasion by this formidable force, had only at its command a body of forty thousand men, spread over a chain of posts along the summit of the Alps, from Savona to Mont Blanc, and an auxiliary Austrian force, ten thousand strong, in the interior. The great superiority of the French forces would have enabled them to have instantly commenced the invasion of Italy; but, pressed in other quarters, the Committee of Public Salvation, under the directions of Robespierre, contented themselves with enjoining their commanders to drive the enemy over the Alps, and get possession of all the passes, leaving to a

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58.

Inactivity of the Prussians.

May 23.

1 *Jom. v.*
177, 179.
St Cyr. ii. 232, 250.

59.

Operations in Piedmont. Mont Cenis is carried by the French.

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March 24.

April 23.

May 14.

1. *Jom. v.*
194, 199,
201. *Bot.*
i. 185, 193,
196.

60.
Great suc-
cesses of
Napoleon
and Massena
in the Mari-
time Alps.

future year the long-wished for irruption into the Italian provinces. The first operations of the Republicans were not successful. General Sarret, with a detachment of two thousand men, was repulsed at the Little St Bernard, while the column destined for the attack of the Mont Cenis was also unsuccessful. Far from being discouraged by these trifling reverses, General Dumas returned to the charge with more considerable forces, and on the 23d April, after a vigorous resistance, made himself master of the first pass, which was followed on the 14th May by the capture of the second. The loss of Mont Cenis cost the Sardinians six hundred prisoners, and twenty pieces of cannon. By these successes the whole ridge of the higher Alps, separating Piedmont from Savoy, fell into the possession of the Republican generals; and the keys of Italy were placed in the hands of the French government.¹

Nor were the operations of the Republicans less successful on the frontiers of Nice. The counsels of the leaders were there directed by General Buonaparte, whose extraordinary military abilities had already given him an ascendancy far beyond his rank. His design was to turn Saorgio by its left, and cut off the retreat of its garrison, by the great road from over the Col di Tende. The attacking force was divided into three columns. The first, twenty thousand strong, commanded by Massena, broke up on the first April, with twenty pieces of cannon, to pass between Saorgio and the sea; the second, composed of ten thousand men, under the immediate directions of Dumorbion, remained in front of the enemy; while the third, of equal force, was destined to gain the upper extremity of the valleys of the Vesubia, and communicate with the army of Savoy by Isola. In the course of his march, Massena traversed the neutral territory of Genoa, and, after a bold march as far as Garessio, found himself considerably in advance of the main body of the enemy, posted in intrenched camps on the western side of the mountains. Guided by the intrepid Colonel Rusea, an ardent chasseur and well acquainted with these Alpine ridges, he boldly pursued his successes, and by a skilful combination of all his force, succeeded in storming the redoubts of the Col Ardente. In vain the Piedmontese received the assailants with a shower of stones and balls; nothing could withstand the

impetuosity of the Republicans, and Massena, pursuing his successes, reached Tanardo, and the heights which commanded the pass of the Briga. Rùsca, familiar with the country, vehemently urged his commander to direct some battalions to descend to the convent of St Dalmazia, seize the great road, destroy the bridges, and cut off the retreat of the great body of the enemy posted at the camp at Rauss. This, however, appeared too hazardous a measure to Massena, who preferred the certain advantage now within his power, of rendering unavoidable, without risk, the evacuation of Saorgio, the cliffs commanding which he had surmounted, to the perilous attempt of compelling a force nearly equal to his own, to surrender. Meanwhile, the attack of the centre, under Dumorbion, had been attended with equal success; and the Sardinian forces pressed in front, and menaced in rear, evacuated the famous camp of Rauss, and fell back towards the Col di Tende. Dumorbion's leading columns approached the fort of Saorgiò, at the same time that Massena's forces appeared on the heights immediately overhanging it behind; and this celebrated post, almost impregnable in front, but destitute of any defence against the forces of the Republicans, now perched on the rocks in its rear, surrendered at the first summons.¹

¹ Botta, l. 184, 190.
Journ. v. 204.
209, 210.
Th. vi. 283.

Meanwhile, the French left successfully ascended the Vesubia, and after a vehement resistance, the winding rocky road between Figaretto and Lantosca was stormed, and the Allies driven back to the Col di Finisterre, while General Serrurier cleared the valley of the Tinea, and established a communication by Isola with the army of Savoy. To reap the fruit of so many successes, Dumorbion ordered Garnier to seize the Col di Finisterre, while his own centre drove the enemy from the Col di Tende. Both operations were successful; the Col di Finisterre fell after hardly any resistance; and although the Col di Tende was more bravely contested, the unexpected appearance of a division of French on their left spread a panic among the Piedmontese troops, which speedily led to the evacuation of the position. Thus, the Republicans, before the end of May, were masters of all the passes through the Maritime Alps; and while, from the summit of Mont Cenis, they threatened a descent upon the valley of Susa and the capital, from the Col di Tende they could advance straight to the

61.
The Sardinians
driven over
the ridge of
the Alps.

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siege of the important fortress of Coni. Napoleon, whose prophetic eye already anticipated the triumphs of 1796, in vain urged the government to unite the victorious armies in the valley of the Stura, and push on immediately with their combined strength to the conquest of Italy. The reverse at Kayserslautern induced them to withdraw ten thousand men from the army of the Alps to support the troops on the Rhine; and Dumorbion, satisfied with the laurels he had won, and with energies enfeebled by years, could not be induced to risk ulterior operations. After so brilliant a *débât*, the Republican forces failed even in reducing the little fort of Exiles, on the eastern descent of Mont Ceniz; and for the three summer months, the victorious troops reposed from their fatigues on the heights which they had won above the clouds.¹

¹ Bot. i. 146,
187. Jom.
v. 211, 211.
Th. vi. 282.

62.
War in the
Eastern
Pyrenees.
Great finan-
cial difficul-
ties of the
Spaniards.

On the frontiers of Spain, the war assumed still more decisive features. The reduction of Toulon enabled the central government to detach General Dugommier with half the forces employed in its siege, to reinforce the army on the eastern Pyrenees; and it was resolved to act offensively at both extremities of that range of mountains. During the winter months incessant exertions were made to recruit the armies, which the immense levies of the Republic enabled the southern departments to do to such a degree, that at the opening of the campaign, notwithstanding their reverses, they were greatly superior in number to their opponents; while the Spanish government, destitute of energy, and exhausted by the exertions they had already made, was unable to maintain their forces at the former complement. Before the end of the year 1793, they were reduced to the necessity of issuing above £12,000,000 sterling of paper money, secured on the produce of the tobacco tax; but all their efforts to recruit their armies from the natives of the country having proved ineffectual, they were compelled to take the foreigners employed at the siege of Toulon into their service, and augment the number of their mercenary troops. Every thing on the Republican side indicated the energy and resolution of a rising, every thing on the Spanish, the decrepitude and vacillation of a declining state. Between such powers, victory could not long remain doubtful.²

² Jom. v.
218, 221.
Toul. iv.
364 Th.
vi. 278, 279.

Dugommier, on his arrival at the end of December, found

the army of the eastern Pyrenees raised by his junction to thirty-five thousand men, encamped under the cannon of Perpignan; but a large proportion of the troops were in hospital, and the remainder in a state of insubordination and dejection, which seemed to promise the most disastrous results. By entirely reorganising the regiments, appointing new officers in the staff, and communicating to all the vigour of his own character, he succeeded in a few months not only in restoring the efficiency of the army, but leading it to the most glorious successes. The Spanish army, recently so triumphant, had proportionally declined; above ten thousand men were in hospital, the expected reinforcements had not arrived, and the force in the field did not exceed twenty-five thousand effective troops. Before the end of February, the French force was augmented to sixty-five thousand men, of whom thirty-five thousand were in a condition immediately to commence operations. On the 27th March, the Republicans broke up and drew near to the Spanish position. A redoubt on the Spanish left was taken a few days after the campaign opened, and General Dagobert was carried off by the malignant fever which had already made such ravages in both armies. The Marquis Amarillas upon that drew back all his forces into the intrenched camp at Boulon. He was shortly after succeeded in the command by La Union, who immediately transferred the headquarters to Ceret, a good position for an attacking, but defective for a defending army. They were there assailed on the 30th April by the whole French force. One of the redoubts in the centre of the Spanish position having been stormed, the whole army fell back in confusion, which was increased into a total rout on the following day, by the Republican troops having made themselves masters of the road to Bellegarde, the principal line of their communication over the mountains into their own country. Finding themselves cut off from this route, the Spaniards were seized with one of those panics so common to their troops in the Peninsular war; the whole army fled in confusion over the hills, and could be rallied only under the cannon of Figueras, leaving one hundred and forty pieces of cannon, fifteen hundred prisoners, eight hundred mules,¹ and all their baggage and ammunition, to

CHAP.
XVI. •

1794.

63.

Successes of
Dugommier
there, and
total defeat
of the Span-
iards.

April 30.

May 1.

¹ Toul. iv.
305, 307.

Jom. v. 222,
225. Th. vi
278, 279.

CHAP. the victors, whose loss did not amount to one thousand
XVI. men,

1794.

64.
Dugommier
follows up
his suc-
cesses.
Collioure
taken.

Dugommier immediately took advantage of his successes to undertake the siege of the fortresses of which the Spaniards had possessed themselves on the French territory. Collioure and Bellegarde were besieged at the same time ; and although the inconsiderate ardour of the Republicans exposed them to a severe check at Port Vendre, the siege of Fort St Elmo was pressed with so much vigour, that the garrison, abandoned to its own resources, was compelled to evacuate the place, and retire to Collioure. Marshal Navarro, the Spanish commander, at the head of a garrison of seven thousand men, made a gallant defence ; and the rocky nature of the ground exposed the besiegers to almost insurmountable difficulties ; but the perseverance of the French engineers having transported artillery to places deemed inaccessible, the commander, after having made a vain attempt to escape by sea, which the tempestuous state of the weather rendered impracticable, laid down his arms with his whole garrison.¹

May 26.
¹ Toul. iv.
308. Jom.
v. 241, 243.

65.
Invasion of
Spain by the
Western
Pyrenees.

At the other extremity of the Pyrenees, the French army, weakened by the detachment of considerable forces to Roussillon to repair the disasters of the preceding campaign, remained in the early part of the year on the defensive. The Republicans in that quarter did not amount to forty thousand men, of whom one-half were National Guards, totally unfit to take the field. An attack by the Spaniards on the French intrenchments early in February having been repulsed, nothing was undertaken of importance in that quarter till the beginning of June, when the government, encouraged by the great advantages gained in Roussillon, resolved to invade the Peninsula at once, at both extremities of the Pyrenees, while the improved organisation of the new levies around Bayonne afforded every prospect of success. The invasion on the west took place by the valley of Bastan, the destined theatre of more memorable achievements between the armies of England and France. The Republicans were divided into three columns, which successively forced the Col di Maya and the valley of Roncesvalles. Some weeks afterwards, an attempt was made by the

June 3.

Spanish commander to regain the position which he had lost ; but he was repulsed with the loss of eight hundred men, and soon after resigned the command of an army the disorder and demoralisation of which were daily increasing. The Count Colomera, who succeeded to the command, was not more successful. He in vain endeavoured, by proclamations, to rouse the mountaineers of the Pyrenees to arms in their defence ; the period had not arrived when the chord of religion was to vibrate through every Spanish heart, and rouse the nation to glorious efforts in the cause of European freedom.¹

CHAP.
XVI. •
1791.
June 23.

¹ Toul. iv.
309, 310.
Jom. v. 248,
252, 255 ;
and vi. 143.

Towards the end of July, the French drove the Spaniards out of the whole of the valley of Bastan, forced the heights of St Marcial, captured the intrenched camp and fortified posts on the Bidassoa, defended by two hundred pieces of cannon, and pushed on to Fontarabia, which surrendered on the first summons. Following up the career of success, they advanced to St Sebastian ; and that important fortress, though garrisoned by seventeen hundred regular troops, capitulated without firing a shot. Colomera took post at Tolosa, to cover the roads leading to Pampeluna and Madrid ; but at the first appearance of the enemy the whole infantry took to flight, and left the cavalry alone to sustain the brunt of the enemy, who, by a gallant charge, succeeded in arresting the advance of the pursuers. By these successes the French were firmly posted in the Spanish territory, and their wants amply supplied from the great magazines and stores, both of ammunition and provisions, which fell into their hands in the fortified places on the frontier. The English historian, who recounts the facility with which these victories were achieved by the inexperienced troops of France, cannot help feeling a conscious pride at the recollection of the very different actions of which that country was afterwards the theatre, and at marking in the scenes of Spanish disgrace the destined theatre of British glory.²

66.
Great successes of the
Republicans in this quarter.
July 24.

August 4.

² Jom. v.
152.

While these events were occurring in Biscay, successes still more decisive were gained on the eastern frontier. Twenty thousand of the Republicans were employed in the blockade of Bellegarde ; and the Catalonians, always ready to take up arms when their hearths were threatened, turned out in great numbers to reinforce the army of La

67.
Siege and capture of
Bellegarde.

CHAP.

XVI.

1794.

Sept. 12.

Union. After three months of incessant efforts, the Spanish commander deemed his troops sufficiently reinstated to resume the offensive, and attempt the relief of Bellegarde, which was now reduced to the last extremity. The principal attack was made against the right wing of Dugommier, and if it had been assailed with sufficient force, the success of the Spaniards could hardly have been doubtful; but the columns of attack having been imprudently divided, the convoy destined to revictual the fortress never reached its destination; and General AUGEREAU,* afterwards Duke of Castiglione and Marshal of France, who commanded the right wing, though driven back to the camp of La Madeleine, succeeded in baffling the objects of the enemy. The consequence was, that the Spaniards, after having at first gained some advantages, were compelled to retreat, and Bellegarde, seeing no prospect of relief, capitulated a few days afterwards. The Spanish general excused himself for the bad success of his arms, by alleging the insubordination and misconduct of the troops. "Without," said he, in his report to government, "consideration, without obeying their chiefs or their officers, who did their utmost to retain them, the soldiers took to flight, after having for the most part thrown away their arms." A battalion was ordered to be decimated for its cowardice, and La Union, despairing of success, solicited his dismissal.¹

¹ Toul v. 30, 31. Jom. vi. 118, 123. Th. vii. 92.

68.
Ineffectual proposals for peace by the Spaniards.

Discouraged by such repeated reverses, the Spanish government made proposals of peace; but the terms were deemed so inadmissible by the Committee of Public Salvation, that they ordered Dugommier to give their answer from the cannons' mouth. In the meanwhile the Spanish commander had leisure to strengthen his positions. Two hundred and fifty guns, in two lines, arranged along a succession of heights nearly seven leagues in extent, presented a front of the most formidable kind, while a smaller intrenched camp in the rear, around Figueras, afforded a secure asylum in case of disaster. But the result proved how rare it is that a position of that description, how strong soever in appearance, is capable of arresting an enterprising and able assailant. The artillery, perched upon eminences, produced but an inconsiderable effect,

* See a biography of AUGEREAU, *infra*, c. xx. § 51.

with its plunging shot, on the masses in the valleys beneath; while the communication between the different parts of the line rendered a disaster in any quarter extremely² probable, from the superior forces which the enemy could bring to bear upon one point; and if it occurred, hardly reparable.¹

On the night of the 16th November, the French attacking army, thirty thousand strong, was put in motion. It was divided into three columns. The right, under the command of Augereau, after an arduous march of eighteen hours over rocks and precipices, drove the Spaniards, under General Courten, from the camp of La Madeleine, and made themselves masters of the whole intrenchments in that quarter; but the left, under General Lauret, was repulsed by the heavy fire from the batteries to which he was opposed; and when Dugommier was preparing to support him, he was killed by a shell from the central redoubts of the enemy. This unlooked-for disaster for a time paralysed the movements of the Republican army; but Perignon having been invested with the command, moved a considerable force to the relief of Lauret, and with some difficulty extricated him from his perilous situation. But Augereau had meanwhile vigorously followed up his successes. After giving his troops breath, he moved them to the centre, and forced the great redoubt, though bravely defended by twelve hundred men; the result of which was, that the Spaniards abandoned five other redoubts, and almost all their artillery, and fell back to their intrenched camp in the neighbourhood of Figueras.²

Perignon instantly prepared to follow up his successes. Wisely judging that the left was the weak point of the enemy's position, he reinforced Augereau in the night with two fresh brigades, and, on the morning of the 20th, moved all his forces to the attack. General Bon, entrusted with the conduct of the vanguard of the right wing, defiled over tracts hardly practicable for single passengers, and crossed the river Muga repeatedly, with the water up to the soldiers' middle. Arrived in the presence of the redoubts, he ascended the mount Escaulas, under a tremendous fire from the Spanish redoubts, and carried at the point of the bayonet the central intrenchment. La Union,

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1794.

¹ Toul. v. 34.Jom. vi. 124.
125.

69.

Great defeat
of the Spaniards near
Figueras.² Toul. v. 34.

Jom. vi. 110.

Th. vii. 200.

70.

Their in-
trenchments
carried, and
Figueras
and Rosas
taken.
Nov. 19.

Nov. 20.

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1794.

Nov. 24.

Feb. 3, 1795.

Jom. vi.

133, 141.

Toul. v. 34.

36. Th. vii.

200.

71.

Invasion of

Biscay, and

defeat of the

Spaniards.

hastening with the reserve to the redoubt of La Rosère, was killed on the spot ; and that fort, regarded as impregnable, having been stormed, its whole defenders were put to the sword. These disasters discouraged the Spaniards along the whole line. Several other redoubts having been carried by the bayonet, the defenders evacuated the remainder, and applied the torch to their mines. In a few minutes, twenty bastions, constructed with infinite labour, were blown into the air ; and the troops charged with their defence, flying in confusion to Figueras, overthrew a column of fresh troops advancing to their support, and rushed in confusion into the gates of the fortress. Such was the dismay of the Spaniards, that when the Republican outposts, a few days afterwards, approached Figueras, the garrison, consisting of above nine thousand men, amply provided with provisions and stores of every sort, laid down their arms ; and the strongest place in Spain, amidst the general acclamation of the inhabitants, was delivered up to the invaders. This unexpected conquest having made the French masters of the rich and fertile plain of Lampourdan, and of an ample supply of stores and artillery of every description, preparations were soon afterwards made for the siege of Rosas. The garrison consisted of nearly five thousand men, and the place, in itself strong, as the glorious siege of 1809 demonstrated, was capable of being reinforced to any extent by sea. Nevertheless, such was the vigour of the Republicans, and the dejection of the Spaniards, that the assailants pushed the siege during the severest months of winter, without any molestation. The fort of Trinity was reduced on the 7th January ; and the garrison, threatened with an immediate assault by a practicable breach, retired by sea in the beginning of February, leaving the fortress to the enemy.¹

Nor was the fortune of war more favourable to the Spanish forces at the other extremity of the line. After the fall of St Sebastian, Colomera endeavoured without effect to rouse the population of the Pyrenean valleys, and the Republicans attempted to erect Biscay into a Republic, to be independent of the Spanish crown. The usual fruits of democratic insurrection speedily appeared. The guillotine was erected at St Sebastian, and, in defiance of a solemn capitulation, the blood of the priests and the

nobles was shed by the French commissioners, with as much inveteracy as if Guipuzcoa had been La Vendée. Meanwhile disease, the result of the misery they had produced, made deeper ravages than the Spanish sword in the ranks of the invaders; in a short time above thirty thousand men perished in the hospitals. At length the Republican columns having been recruited by the never-failing levies in the interior, a general attack, late in autumn, was commenced on the Spanish positions. In the valley of Roncesvalles, their best division, after a vigorous resistance, was routed with the loss of forty pieces of cannon and fifteen hundred prisoners, and a severe tempest of wind and rain alone prevented its total destruction. This success enabled the invaders to seize and burn the founderies of Orbaizita and D'Enguy, which had so long served for the supply of the Spanish marine; after which they retired to the neighbourhood of St Sebastian and Fontarabia, still occupying in force the valley of Bastan.¹

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XVI.

1794.

Oct. 16.
1 Jom. vi.
154, 167.
Th. vii. 199,
200. Toul.
v. 218.

These repeated disasters, and the evident disaffection of a considerable portion of their subjects, who were infected by the rage for democratic institutions, at length disposed the Spanish government to an accommodation. Nor were the Committee of Public Salvation inclined to insist on rigorous conditions, as the liberation of two experienced and victorious armies promised to be of the utmost importance to the Republican armies, in the conquests which they meditated to the south of the Alps. With these dispositions on both sides, the work of negotiation was not difficult; and although the conclusion of the treaty was deferred to the succeeding year, yet it was understood on both sides that negotiations were in progress, and no operations of importance were undertaken after this period. The severe winter of 1794-5, which gave the Republican troops the mastery of Holland, closed their operations on the snows of the Pyrenees.²

72.
They sue
for peace.

2 Jom. vi.
168. Toul.
v. 221.

The approach of winter, however, afforded no respite to the armies on the northern frontier. After a delay of two months, occasioned by the secret negotiations which the fall of Robespierre had broken off, the Republican armies recommenced those active operations which their immense superiority of physical force speedily rendered

73.
Renewal of
hostilities in
Flanders.

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XVI.

1794.

decisive. The Army of the North had seventy thousand effective men under its banners; that of the Sambre and Meuse, nominally 145,000 strong, presented an efficient force of 116,000 men; while the Duke of York, to cover the United Provinces, had hardly fifty thousand; and General Clairfait, who had replaced Prince Cobourg, could only muster a hundred thousand to maintain the footing of the Imperialists in the Flemish provinces. The French armies were so situated that they could mutually communicate with, and support each other: the Austrians and English were far asunder, incapable of rendering mutual aid, and alienated by long-continued common disaster. But, considered morally, the inequality between the contending armies was still greater. On the one side was the triumph of victory, the vigour of democratic ambition, the ardour of patriotic enthusiasm, the confidence of increasing numbers, and conscious ability; on the other, the dejection of defeat, the recrimination of commanders, the jealousies of nations, declining numbers, and an obstinate adherence to antiquated tactics.¹

1. *Jom.* vi.
15, 26. *Th.*
vii. 76.

74.
British re-
tire to the
right bank of
the Meuse.
Sept. 4.

All anxiety about their rear having been removed by the reduction of Condé, Valenciennes, Quesnoy, and Landrecy, the Republicans in the end of August resumed the offensive. The fort of Eleuse having surrendered to General Moreau, the army of the North, reinforced by his division, commenced the invasion of Holland, while the States-General obstinately persisted in maintaining half their troops, amounting to twenty thousand men, in garrison in the interior, thirty leagues from the theatre of war, thereby leaving the protection of the frontier to the comparatively inconsiderable force of the British commander. With little more than half the invader's troops, the Duke of York was charged with the defence of a frontier twenty leagues in extent. He first took up a defensive position behind the Aa; but his advanced posts having been defeated by the French with the loss of fifteen hundred prisoners, he was compelled to retire to the right bank of the Meuse, leaving the important places of Bergen-op-Zoom, Breda, and Bois-le-Duc, to their own resources.²

Sept. 15.
2 *Jom.* vi. 22.
25. *Toul.* v.
66, 67. *Th.*
vii. 77, 78.
Sept. 18.

Meanwhile the army of the Sambre and Meuse, under Jourdan, made preparations for a general attack on the scattered forces of Clairfait. On the 18th, the Republicans,

divided into six columns, broke up, and a number of partial actions took place along the whole line; but the post of Ayvaile having been forced by the French, the Austrians fell back with the loss of fifteen hundred men, and thirty-six pieces of cannon; and, after several ineffectual attempts to make a stand, finally evacuated their positions on the Meuse, and retired towards Rolduc and Aix-la-Chapelle. Jourdan immediately followed them; and while Kleber, with fifteen thousand men, formed the blockade of Maestricht, the General himself, with a hundred thousand, pressed the discomfited forces of Clairfait, now hardly in a condition to keep the field, from the confusion and precipitance of their retreat. In vain the Imperialists took up a strong defensive position behind the Roer: On the 2d of October, the Republican columns were in motion at break of day, to assail their position; and for the first time since the Revolution, the splendid spectacle was exhibited, of ninety thousand men moving to the attack with the precision and regularity of a field-day. The Germans occupied a series of heights behind the river, from whence their numerous artillery kept up a destructive plunging fire upon the advancing columns of the French; but nothing could arrest the enthusiasm of the Republicans. The French grenadiers, with Bernadotte at their head, plunged into the stream, and drove the Austrians from the opposite heights, while General Scherer, on the other wing, also forced the passage of the river, and made himself master of Dueren. These disasters induced Clairfait, who still bravely maintained himself in the centre, to order a general retreat, which was effected before nightfall, with the loss of three thousand men; while that of the French did not amount to half the number.¹

This battle a second time decided the fate of Flanders, and threw back the Imperial army beyond the Rhine. The Austrians in haste crossed that river at Mulheim, and Jourdan entered Cologne the day following, and soon afterwards extended his troops to Bonn. Soon after the siege of Maestricht was seriously undertaken, and such was the activity of the Committee of Public Salvation, that a splendid siege equipage, of two hundred pieces, descended the Meuse, and speedily spread desolation through the city. A large cavern, discovered in the rock on which the

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XVI.

1794.

75.

Battle of
Ruremonde,
and retreat
of the Aus-
trians.
Sept. 18.

Oct. 2.

1 Jom. vi.
32, 36, 46.
Toul. v. 69*
Th. vii. 79,
84.

76.

Who cross
the Rhine,
and Maes-
tricht is
taken.
Oct. 5.

Oct. 10.

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XVI.

1794.

Nov. 4.

1 Jom. vi. 42.
45. Toul. v.
79. Th. vii.
85.

77.
Active pur-
suit of the
English by
the Republi-
cans, and
retreat of the
former be-
hind the
Waal.

Sept. 29.

Oct. 10.

1 Toul. v.
68, 72, 77,
78. Jom.
vi 47, 56.
Th. vii. 86.

fort of St Petre was situated, gave rise to a subterranean warfare, in which the French soldiers, ever ready to adapt themselves to circumstances, speedily distinguished themselves, and acquired a superiority over their opponents. At length, on November 4, the garrison, despairing of being relieved, capitulated, upon condition of not serving against the French till regularly exchanged; and this noble fortress, with three hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, fell into the hands of the Republicans. After this event, and the capture of the castle of Rheinfels by the army of the Moselle, which shortly after took place, there remained nothing of all their vast possessions on the left bank of the Rhine, but Luxembourg and Mayence, in the hands of the Imperialists.¹

Nor were the operations of the left wing, destined for the invasion of Holland, less successful. After the retreat of the Duke of York, Pichegru, whose forces amounted to seventy thousand efficient troops, formed the siege of Bois-le-Duc, the situation of which, being at the confluence of three streams, was of importance as a base to their future operations. The States-General had neglected to provide for the defence of this important fortress; and the Duke of York had not a man he could detach for its succour; its garrison was too weak either to man the works or undergo the fatigue of a siege; the fort of Crevecoeur surrendered almost at the first shot, and in a fortnight after the place capitulated, after a resistance disgraceful to the Dutch arms. After this success, the English general distributed his troops along the line of the Waal, in hopes of being able to maintain a communication with the fortress of Grave, now threatened with a siege; but Pichegru, continuing his career of success, crossed the Meuse, and attacked the advanced posts of the Allies with so much vigour, that they were compelled to fall back with considerable loss, across the Waal. After this check, the Duke of York stationed part of his troops in an intrenched camp, under the cannon of Nimeguen, and the remainder in a line around Thiel, and between the Waal and the Leek, communicating with the Dutch corps at Gorcum, in the hope of being permitted to remain there undisturbed during the winter. Meanwhile Pichegru invested Grave and Venloo;² the latter of which, though

defended by a sufficient garrison of eighteen hundred men, and amply provided with artillery and ammunition, surrendered before the works were injured, from the mere annoyance of the enemy's musketry.

The successive intelligence of the defection of the Prussians, and the open abandonment of the Low Countries by the Austrian troops, which exposed Holland and Hanover to the immediate invasion of the Republican forces, afforded the Opposition in the English Parliament a favourable opportunity for renewing their attacks on the government; and they triumphantly observed, that after twenty-seven months of bloodshed and combats, the Allies were reduced to the same situation in which they were when Dumourier projected the invasion of Holland. But nothing could shake the firmness of Mr Pitt. "It matters little," said he, "whether the disasters which have arisen are to be ascribed to the weakness of the generals, the intrigues of camps, or the jealousies of the cabinets; the fact is, that they exist, and that we must anew commence the salvation of Europe." In pursuance of this heroic resolution, Sir Arthur Paget was dispatched to Berlin, to endeavour to obtain some light on the ambiguous and suspicious conduct of Prussia, and Lord Spencer to Vienna, to endeavour to divert the Imperial Cabinet from their alarming intention of abandoning the Low Countries. As soon as the latter nobleman arrived at Vienna, he obtained a private audience of the Emperor, and laid before him the proposals of the English government, which were no less than the offer of an annual subsidy of three millions sterling, provided the Imperialists would renew the war in Flanders, and give the command of the army to the Archduke Charles, with Clairfait, Beaulieu, and Mack for his council. At the same time they stated such facts respecting the measures of Cobourg as confirmed the suspicions which the cabinet of Vienna already entertained in regard to his conduct, and led to his recall from the army, of which Clairfait assumed the command.¹

The cabinet of Vienna, however, secretly inclined to peace, delayed giving any definite answer to the proposals of Mr Pitt, and meanwhile entertained covert overtures from the French government; while Clairfait received orders to remain altogether on the right bank of the Rhine,

CHAP.
XVI.

1794.

78.
Efforts of
the English
Opposition
to decay the
war, and
firmness of
Mr Pitt.

¹ Hard. III.
41, 69, 73.
Parl. Hist.
xxxi. 1036.

CHAP.

XVI.

1794.

79.

But the
Austrian
and Prussian
Cabinets re-
solve on
peace, and
contract
their efforts.

Dec. 5.

and Alvinzi was merely detached with twenty-five thousand men to co-operate with the Duke of York in the defence of Holland. This retreat renewed the alarm of Prussia for her possessions on the Rhine, which was much increased by the cessation about the same period of the subsidies from the English government, who most justly declined to continue their monthly payments to a power which was doing nothing in aid of the common cause. Frederick William upon this withdrew twenty thousand of his best troops from the army of the Rhine, to join the forces which the Empress Catherine was moving towards Warsaw under the far-famed Suwarroff. The French immediately made themselves masters of the whole left bank of the Rhine; the castle of Rheinfels fell into their hands, and there remained nothing to the Allies of their great possessions on that side of the stream but the fortresses of Luxembourg and Mayence. It was now evident that the coalition was rapidly approaching its dissolution. The King of Prussia openly received overtures of peace from the French government, while the Duke of Wirtemberg, the Elector of Saxony, the Elector of Mayence, and the other lesser potentates, secretly made advances to the same effect, and insisted so strongly on the danger of their situation, that the Emperor, notwithstanding all the firmness of Thugut, was obliged to acquiesce in their pacific measures. The 5th of December was the day fixed for the discussion of the important question of peace or war in the diet of the empire. And such was the consternation generally diffused by the divisions of the Allies, and successes of the French, that fifty-seven voices then declared for peace, and thirty-six demanded the King of Prussia for a mediator. This important resolution at once determined the conduct of Prussia. She now threw off the mask, and established conferences at Bâle preparatory to a peace; while England made unheard-of efforts to retain Austria in the confederacy, and at length, by the offer of a subsidy of £6,000,000, prevailed on that power to maintain her armies on the defensive on the banks of the Rhine, and resume, in the ensuing campaign, a vigorous offensive in Italy.¹

¹ Hard. iii.
81, 98, 110.
Malmesbury.
517, 314.

The successes which have been detailed, great as they were, turned out to be but the prelude, on the part of the

French, to a winter campaign, attended with still more decisive results. Towards the end of October, Pichegru undertook the siege of Nimeguen; the Duke of York approached with thirty thousand men, and by a vigorous sally upon the besiegers, who had the temerity to open their trenches, though the place was only invested on the left bank of the Waal, gained a brilliant but ephemeral success, attended by no important consequences. Shortly after, the French established some batteries, destined to command the bridge which connected the town with the intrenched camp in its rear, and soon sank some of the pontoons composing it; which so much disconcerted the allied commanders, that they hastily evacuated the place with the bulk of the garrison, in the night, leaving its defence to an inadequate garrison of three thousand men. These troops, discouraged by the flight of their fellow-soldiers, overawed by the redoubled fire of the besiegers, and despairing of maintaining the place, immediately attempted to follow their example. Terror seized their ranks; they precipitated themselves upon the bridge, which was burned before the rear-guard had passed over. One regiment was obliged to capitulate, and part of another, embarked on a flying bridge, was stranded on the left bank, and next day made prisoners by the French. Thus this splendid fortress, which rendered them masters of the passage of the Waal, fell into the hands of the Republicans. The Dutch loudly reproached the English with the abandonment of this important point, but apparently without reason; for how was it to be expected that the Duke of York, with thirty thousand men, was to maintain himself in presence of seventy thousand French, with the Rhine in his rear, when three times that force of Austrians had deemed themselves insecure, till they had that river, a hundred miles further up, thrown between them and the enemy? Be that as it may, the evacuation of Nimeguen completed the misunderstanding between the allied powers, and by spreading the belief in Holland that their cause was hopeless, and that their allies were about to abandon them, eminently contributed to the easy conquest of the United Provinces which so soon after followed. Grave was immediately besieged; and Breda, one of the last of the Dutch barrier towns, invested.¹

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1794.

80.

Siege of
Nimeguen,
and winter
campaign in
Holland, and
misunder-
standing be-
tween the
Dutch and
English.
Oct. 27.

Nov. 4.

¹ Toul. v.
76, 77. Jom.
vi. 174, 177
Th. vi. 176,
177.

CHAP.

XVI.

1794.

81.

Extraordi-
nary fatigues
and increas-
ed efforts of
the French
army.

The French army, worn out with seven months of incessant marching and bivouacs, now stood excessively in need of repose. The clothing of the soldiers was in rags, their shoes were worn out, and the equipments of the artillery, but for the supplies received from the captured places, would long ago have been exhausted. But all the representations of the generals upon these points were overruled. The Committee of Public Salvation, inflamed by the spirit of conquest, and guided by the enterprise of Carnot, resolved upon exacting from them fresh sacrifices. Accustomed to find every difficulty yield to the devotion of the Republican soldiers, or be overcome by the prodigious amount of the Republican levies, they resolved, after a month's rest to the troops, to prosecute their successes in the midst of a rigorous winter, and to render the severity of the season the means of overcoming the natural defences of the Dutch provinces. The first object was to cross the Waal, and, after driving the allied forces over all the mouths of the Rhine, penetrate into Holland by the Isle of Bommel. For this purpose, boats had for some time past been collected at Fort Crevecoeur, and pontoons and other materials for a bridge at Bois-le-Duc; and the preparations having been completed, the passage was commenced, at daybreak, on the 12th November. But the firm countenance of the Allies defeated all their attempts; and, after several ineffectual efforts, Moreau, whose sagacity clearly perceived the danger of persisting in the design, withdrew his troops, and the army was put into winter quarters, between the Meuse and the Rhine.¹

Nov. 12.
1. *Join.* vi.
179. 182.
Toul. v. 166.
Th. vii. 178,
181.

82.
Pichegru
projects a
winter cam-
paign.

Early in December, the Duke of York, supposing the campaign finished; set out for England, leaving to General Walmoden the perilous task of protecting, with an inferior and defeated army, a divided country against a numerous and enterprising enemy. But a severe frost, which soon after set in, and rendered that winter long memorable in physical annals, made the Republicans conceive the design of invading Holland, while the cold rendered the numerous canals and rivers which intersected the country passable for troops and artillery. The prospect of that danger excited the utmost alarm in the mind of General Walmoden, who, seeing the Meuse frozen in his front, while the Rhine and the Waal, the waters of which are prevented from

congealing by the tide which flows up there, charged with floating ice in his rear, was justly afraid that the same severe weather which exposed his line to the attacks of the enemy, would render the passage of the arms of the sea in his rear impracticable in the event of retreat. Influenced by these apprehensions, he passed his heavy cavalry to the other side of the Waal, evacuated his magazines and hospitals upon Dewenter, and ordered the Prince of Hesse d'Armstadt, cantoned with the most advanced corps in the Isle of Bommel, to abandon it, on the first intelligence of the passage of the Meuse by the enemy.¹

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¹ Jom. vi.
183, 184
Toul. v. 167.
Th. vii. 182,
183.

Situated around the mouths of the Rhine, HOLLAND exhibits the most striking contrast to the stupendous range of snowy mountains in which that noble river takes its rise. It is remarkable that the two most celebrated Republics of Europe, and the only ones which have long survived the changes of time, are placed at the opposite extremities of the same stream; and that freedom in the one has found the same shelter in the mountains from which it springs, as in the other, amidst the marshes in which it is lost before emptying itself into the sea. The Meuse and the Scheldt on the south, and the Wechte and Issel on the north, flow through a part of its surface; but the principal rivers which traverse the Dutch territory, the New Issel, the Waal, as well as the Rhine properly so called, and a multitude of lesser branches, are but mouths of that mighty stream. Like the Danube, the Nile, the Ganges, the Mississippi, and all other great rivers, the Rhine has, in the course of ages, brought down an immense mass of sand, gravel, and other alluvial matter, which, accumulating on the level shores near its entrance into the sea, have at length formed the plains of Holland, through which its now broken and lazy current with difficulty finds a passage, in many different branches, to the German ocean.²

83.
Description
of Holland.

² Personal
observation,
Malte Brun,
vii. 2, 4.

A territory formed in this manner, by the confluence at their entrance into the sea of many different streams, is of course exceedingly flat, and in many places broken both by large internal lakes and considerable external arms of the sea and mouths of rivers. So frequent, indeed, are these aqueous interruptions of the Dutch

84.
Its sea
dykes, and
peculiar
conforma-
tion.

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territory, that in many places it is composed rather of a cluster of islands, than a continuous tract of dry land ; and the inhabitants, from the constant necessity of traversing the water, in passing from one part of the country to another, and the large proportion of their subsistence and their wealth which they derive from its fisheries or its commerce, are almost entirely nautical in their habits. So general is the custom of looking to naval communication as the great means of intercourse, that when lakes or firths are wanting, the industry of the people has supplied artificial means of obtaining it ; and a multitude of canals, cut in every direction, at once afford cheap and commodious channels for commerce, and furnish water for innumerable artificial cuts, by which the riches of irrigation are diffused over their extensive meadows. These broad expanses were originally sandy and sterile ; but the pasturage of centuries has covered them with a thick coating of mingled animal and vegetable remains, and in no part of the world are more luxuriant crops of grass now obtained, or more skill evinced in the management of the dairy. The stormy waves of the German Ocean are only kept out from these low and grassy meads, by dykes constructed in former times at an incredible expense, and maintained in these by incessant vigilance and attention. The slightest relaxation in their care is speedily followed with fatal effects ; an accidental fissure in the protecting sea front, a rat's hole, or the displacing by a storm of a few feet of earth, if not immediately remedied, is sufficient to open an inlet to the external waters. Quickly they pour down to the lower level of the meadows ; the entrance is rapidly widened by the force of the torrent ; in a few hours a great breach is made in the rampart, the ocean rushes in in a torrent some hundred fathoms broad ; the whole level surface is ere long covered by the waves, the houses are submerged, and the tops of the trees and spires of the villages appear like scattered islets amidst the waste of waters.¹

¹ Personal observation. *Malte Brun*, vii. 4, 5.

85.
Dreadful
irruptions
of the sea
in former
times.

Dreadful catastrophes in former times have shown the reality and awful character of these dangers. Three centuries and a half ago, the sea of Haarlem, which covers a space five leagues long by two and a half broad, was formed by the sea breaking through the dykes which protected it. On the night of the 19th November 1421,

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during a violent storm, the sea dyke of North Brabant gave way: the ocean rushed in, and before morning seventy villages had been submerged, a hundred thousand persons drowned, and twelve square leagues of fertile land converted into a watery waste, in which the remains of steeples and buildings may still be discerned in calm weather beneath the waves. The Dollart Sea, situated between the province of Groningen in North Holland and the territory of Hanover, which is eight leagues long and three broad, was formed by an inroad of the sea in 1277, which swallowed up thirty-three villages; and the great Zuyder Zee itself, thirty leagues in length, and twenty in breadth, which covers a surface as extensive as Yorkshire, was formed in 1225 by an irruption of the German Ocean, which broke through the line of sand-hills and dykes, the direction of which may still be clearly traced on the map, by the long line of islands which mark the original frontier of North Holland.¹

¹ Malte
Brun, vii.
4, 5.

“ The floating vessel swam
Uplifted, and secure, with beaked prow,
Rode tilting o’er the waves; all dwellings else
Flood overwhelmed, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water rolled; sea covered sea,
Sea without shore: and in their palaces
Where luxury late reigned, sea monsters whelped
And stabled.”

A country, in this manner originally wrested, and still preserved by incessant efforts, from the waves, necessarily has had a peculiar character and specific manners impressed upon it by the all-powerful signet of nature. Strenuous efforts have won for man the land which he inhabits; ceaseless vigilance alone preserves it; and these lasting causes have communicated to the inhabitants habits and customs peculiarly their own. Constant exertion, persevering industry, vigilant circumspection, have become habitual from necessity, and still form the great characteristics of the country. Their national character perhaps approaches more nearly to that of England than of any other people in Europe; but yet it is in some particulars widely different. It wants the fire and energy, the lofty spirit, and great aspirations, which have been communicated to the British race by their Danish and Norman conquerors; but it possesses the perseverance and industry, the honesty

86.
Character
and habits of
the people.

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1 Personal
observation.

87.
Influences
of this cha-
racter on
their nation-
al history.

and good faith, the love of freedom and spirit of order, which, even more than their courage and capacity, are destined to give the Anglo-Saxon race the dominion of half the globe. The love of freedom has there existed, in general, in conjunction with its indispensable allies, order and religion; a methodical system pervades every branch of their social economy; community of interest retains the sailors and workmen in willing obedience to their superiors. Order and frugality constitute the leading features of the higher class of their merchants. Religion is established in decent competence: pauperism relieved with discriminating humanity.¹

Nor have these admirable qualities been without their reward, both in former and recent times. Holland for centuries has exhibited a spectacle of social felicity and general virtue which might well put richer and greater nations to the blush, for the superior natural advantages which they have misapplied, and the boundless physical resources they have wasted. During the terrible contest which terminated in the establishment of the religious freedom of the sixteenth century, the United Provinces stood forth pre-eminent. The indomitable spirit of the House of Orange defeated successively the tyranny of Spain and the ambition of France; and the sieges of Haarlem and Leyden will remain to the end of the world enduring monuments of the almost supernatural constancy which the heroism of religious duty can inspire even in a pacific community. When England, deserting her natural post in the van of freedom, leagued with France to crush the religious liberties of Europe, that noble commonwealth strenuously and often successfully resisted. Its fleets burned the English ships in their harbours; its admirals swept the Channel in their pride; and the maritime struggle, the severest that England ever knew, was determined at length, less by the defeat of the followers of Van Tromp and De Ruyter, than by the voluntary return of British policy to the alliance which duty, equally with interest, prescribed with their sturdy antagonists on the waves. When the French Revolution broke out, and Holland, partly by external violence, partly through internal delusion, was subjugated by the all-conquering Republic, the moral tempest uprooted none of the bulwarks of order in that steady community. Jacobin cupidity in vain urged the insurgent

multitude to deeds of spoliation ; the government was changed, but no acts of ferocity were committed ; the nation suffered and endured during the despotism of Napoleon ; and when at length the colossus of imperial power was overthrown, ancient habits were resumed, ancient influences re-established, without one deed of revenge being committed, or one tear, save in joy, being shed ; and the partisans, equally with the princes of the House of Orange, restored the former government, with the glorious declaration, “ Orange Boven ! ” old times are returning ; what we have suffered is forgotten and forgiven.”¹

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¹ Proclamation, Amsterdam, Nov. 13. 1814. *Infra*, ix. 679.

Achievements so wonderful, a history so glorious, could have been brought about in a country enjoying so limited and sterile a territory, only by the energies of commercial enterprise, and the resources of maritime wealth. It is the merchants and sailors of Holland who have, in every age, constituted alike in peace and war the strength and sinews of the state. Their industry and perseverance have discovered mines of wealth in every quarter of the globe. On the coast of Scotland they opened a fishery which yielded them two millions sterling annually, two centuries before that source of wealth was touched on by the Scotch people ; in the West Indies their sagacity led to the discovery, and their industry to the cultivation, of the richest sugar colonies in existence ; in the East they have acquired, and still retain, in Java, the noblest island in the Indian archipelago. For centuries they engrossed nearly the whole carrying trade of the world ; the vast colonial empire of Great Britain and the disasters of the revolutionary war alone wrested it in part from them during the late conflicts. The merchants of Amsterdam numbered all the sovereigns of Europe among their debtors. All the luxuries of the earth were wafted to their shores by the sails of their commerce ; and the commercial influence of a state so small as to be scarcely distinguishable in a general map of the globe, was felt from one end of the world to the other.

88.
Immense commerce of the Dutch.

The old United Provinces, now forming the kingdom of Holland, enjoyed a very limited territory ; they contained only 1036 square marine leagues, or 8326 square geographical miles, amounting to 2,814,000 hectares. This small and swampy territory is inhabited by 2,443,000 inhabi-

89.
Population and extent of Holland and its colonies.

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1794.

tants, being in many places, particularly the province of Holland properly so called, the most densely peopled country in Europe.* Such, however, has been the vigour and enterprise of the Dutch, that this inconsiderable territory and population have acquired colonies in Africa, America, and the Indian Archipelago, inhabited by 9,426,000 souls, and extending over a superficies of 234,000 square miles; so that the kingdom of Holland now embraces, in all parts of the world, 12,000,000 of souls and 244,000 square geographical miles of territory, or above twice and a half the whole area of Great Britain and Ireland, which contains 91,000. Its income, according to the budget of 1836, was 85,000,000 francs, (£3,400,000,) its expenditure is now 105,000,000 francs, (£4,200,000,) and its national debt, as fixed by the treaty of 1831, 559,000,000 francs, (£22,000,000;) so disastrous has been the burden of the costly naval and military establishment which the iniquitous partition of the kingdom of the Netherlands, by the revolutionary ambition of France and England in 1830, has occasioned.† Yet in spite of this grievous load, such is the general confidence of all nations in the resources and good faith of the Dutch government, founded on centuries of probity and regularity of payment, that their funds are amongst the highest in Europe, and although yielding hardly five per cent dividend, are sought after as a secure investment all over the world.¹

It is in the extraordinary industry and activity of the urban population of Holland, that the secret of these prodigious resources, existing in a country enjoying such very limited natural advantages, is to be found. The great towns of Holland are numerous, industrious, and wealthy, beyond those on a similar extent of territory in any other country of continental Europe. Considerable as they are in point of

¹ Malte Brun, vii. 41, 43.
Ann. Hist. xvi. 664.
Balbi, 637.

* 96.
Magnitude and historical celebrity of their towns.

• This is the superficies and population of the old United Provinces; the modern kingdom of Holland has received, by the Treaty of Separation with Belgium in November 15, 1831, a considerable district of Limburg and Luxembourg, inhabited by 331,000 souls; making the total population of the kingdom of Holland, in Europe, at this time, 2,775,000 souls; and its area in Europe, 3,252,000 hectares, or 9,780 square geographical miles.—MALTE BRUN, vii. 46; and BALBI, 637.

† The total debt of the kingdom of the Netherlands was 1,198,625,000 francs, (£48,000,000;) but of this immense sum 639,366,000 was, by the treaty of partition of 15th November 1831, fixed on Belgium, leaving 559,259,000 francs, or £22,000,000, to the charge of Holland.—See MALTE BRUN, vii. 43, and *Treaty*, 15th November 1831; MARTEN'S *Nouvelle Série*, ii. 398.

numerical amount of inhabitants, they are yet more remarkable from the vast commercial intercourse of which they have long been the emporium, and the many eminent men in literature and philosophy who have flourished within their walls. The numerous editions, dear to the student, which have issued from their printing-presses, and the glorious deeds in arms of which their ramparts have been the theatre, have given them a celebrity beyond what the magnitude of their population could otherwise have produced.* The necessity of fortifications to protect their narrow territory, from the grasping ambition of France, has caused all their cities to be surrounded with walls, nearly the whole of which, at least on the frontier towards the Scheldt, have been celebrated in military annals by obstinate and heroic sieges. Like the cities of Greece in ancient, or of the Italian republics in modern times, they have become immortal alike in arts and in arms. Every step in Holland and Flanders is historical; the shades of William and De Witt, of Marlborough, of Eugene, arise at every step; glorious recollections recur to the mind with every name.

Except in defending towns, when both the soldiers and citizens often evinced the most obstinate valour, the military force of the United Provinces, which seldom exceeded forty thousand regular forces, and which was generally only twenty-four, never acquired any great celebrity. It was the sea which was the theatre at once of their ambition, of their prowess, and of their glory. With the exception of the English, the Dutch sailors have always been the best in Europe; and if victory in the end inclined, in the desperate war with the United Provinces, to the British flag, it was less from any superiority in the seamen than from the greater physical resources which a larger

9
Military and
naval forces
of Holland.

* The population of the principal towns in Holland is as follows:—

		Inhabitants.			Inhabitants.
Amsterdam	-	220,000	Rotterdam	-	66,000
The Hague	-	49,000	Utrecht	-	36,000
Zwoll	-	31,000	Leyden	-	29,000
Haarlem	-	21,000	Groningen	-	24,000
Dordrecht	-	17,500	Middelburg	-	17,000
Leeuwarden	-	17,000	Delft	-	14,000
Bois-Je-Duc	-	13,000	Nimeguen	-	13,000
Breda	-	11,000	Hoorn	-	10,000
Zaandam	-	10,000	Dewenter	-	10,000
Bergen-op-Zoom	-	6,000	Flushing	-	5,000

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territory and wider colonial dominions brought to their arms. No period, even in the bright annals of the English navy, has yet equalled the extraordinary and patriotic efforts made by the Dutch when assailed by the combined fleets of Louis XIV. and Charles II.; for England never had to combat so overwhelming a superiority of force. Fleets of forty and fifty ships of the line were then repeatedly fitted out by the Republic, which combated always with glory, often with success, the yet more numerous combined squadrons of France and England, led by the valiant Duke of York. When the war broke out in 1793, the United Provinces had still forty-nine ships of the line, and seventy frigates and smaller vessels; though a large proportion of the former bore only sixty-four and fifty-six guns. But such were the calamities in which they became involved from the revolutionary war, that at this time, notwithstanding the acquisition of a third of the Scheldt fleet by the treaty of 1814, the King of Holland now possesses only five ships of the line, and nineteen frigates.¹

¹ James' Naval History, i. 50. Malte Brun, vii. 41, 43.

92.
Government and social institutions of the United States.

The government and social institutions of Holland, under the old commonwealth, were very peculiar, and different from those of any other Republic which ever existed. The people had all a share in the administration of public affairs; but they had so, not as individuals, but in their separate incorporations, guildries, or trades; and in these the distribution of power was so arranged that influence was nearly entirely centred in the burgomasters and heads of the different bodies. But these heads of incorporations or magistrates of towns did not constitute a hereditary exclusive aristocracy as in Venice or Genoa; they were composed of persons who had risen by their wealth and frugality to eminence in their several crafts, or acquired the lead in them by their probity and good conduct. Thus, though the working-classes had scarcely any share in the actual appointment of government, yet no sullen line of demarcation debarred them from it: the career of industry was open to all; but none could obtain influence except such as had acquired property. The institutions of Holland in this manner combined that opening of the path of public eminence to all, which Napoleon described as the great want which led to the French Revolution,² with that arrangement of the citizens in their

² Burke's Appeal from Old to New Whigs, 228, 229.

separate classes, and according to their realised estates, which the Romans accomplished by their centuries, and Mr Burke described as the true principle of a conservative democracy.* It is in these institutions that, the real cause of the stability and good faith of their government, and the tranquil, industrious character of their people is to be found.

The preceding account of this interesting Commonwealth will not, by the reflecting mind, be deemed misplaced even in a work of general history. It is not by mere magnitude of territory, or numbers of inhabitants, that the importance of a country is to be measured. The wisdom of institutions, the heroism of actions, the patriotism of the people, constitute the only real passport to immortality. Judging by this standard, the United Provinces will take a place second only to France and England in European history. Amidst the multiplied scenes of carnage, the sickening deeds of iniquity which have ever characterised democratic ascendancy in the world, it is refreshing to find one instance in which a Commonwealth has existed for centuries unchanged, alike in its character and its institutions, in which order has coexisted with freedom, social happiness with national independence, heavy public burdens with unshaken national faith. It encourages the pleasing hope, that means may yet be found of reconciling the contending interests of society; of elevating labour without destroying property, of affording protection without encouraging license, and opening industry without inducing equality.

But most of all, the British historian feels himself called upon to render such an act of justice to the United Provinces. Twice in English history—during periods which he would willingly blot from its annals—England, in violation alike of its plighted faith and its obvious interests, has united with France for the oppression of Holland: once in the seventeenth century, when bought by French

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93.

Importance
of the pre-
ceding re-
cord of Hol-
land.

94.

Injustice of
England to
Holland in
recent
times.

* "There is no ground for holding a multitude, told by head, to be the People. Such a multitude can have no sort of title to alter the seat of power, in any country; in which it ever ought to be the obedient, and not the ruling power. What power may belong to the whole mass, in which mass the natural aristocracy, or what by convention is appointed to represent and strengthen it, acts in its proper place, with its proper weight, and without being subjected to violence, is a deeper question. In that case, and with that concurrence, no such rash or desperate changes as we have witnessed in France, could ever be effected."—*Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*—BURKE'S Works, vi. 328.

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gold; once in the nineteenth, when deluded by French democracy. The English historian cannot restore to the House of Orange the kingdom of the Netherlands, guaranteed by his government in the treaty of Vienna; nor the citadel of Antwerp, reft from its dominions by the arms of his country. But he can, with sorrow, confess a breach of national honour equalling the partition of Poland in its injustice, and a deviation from policy exceeding Joseph's destruction of the barrier towns in its inexpedience. And if these lines should meet the eye of a citizen of that ancient and memorable Republic, it may afford him some consolation to discover, that there are men in England who can characterise with equal severity injustice committed under their own flag, as beneath the banners of their enemies; and see, in the impartial administration of Providence, the same justice dealt out to his own as to foreign usurpation. He must be blind indeed, who does not discern, in the fierce demand for the Repeal of the Union, which so soon after threatened dismemberment to the British empire, the natural consequence and just punishment of that iniquitous interference to support a Romish rebellion and the partition of an ancient ally, which, bringing the arms of England, for the first time recorded in history, into a league with Roman Catholic fanaticism and French propagandism, has succeeded in converting the barrier of Europe against France, into the outwork of France against Europe, and restoring Antwerp, the fulcrum of Napoleon against England, to a revolutionary dynasty, and the sway of the tricolor flag.

95.
Pichegru
makes a
general at-
tack on the
allied posi-
tion.
Dec. 28.

At the end of December, the Meuse being entirely frozen over, and the cold as low as 17° of Reaumur, corresponding to zero of Fahrenheit, the French army commenced its winter campaign by an attack on two columns of the Dutch advanced posts. The result was what might have been expected from an irruption into a cordon of troops by concentrated forces; the Dutch troops, after a slight resistance, fled in confusion, some to Utrecht, and others to Gorcum, leaving sixty pieces of cannon, and sixteen hundred prisoners, in the hands of the invaders. In the general confusion the Republicans even made themselves masters of some forts on the Waal, and crossed that river; but the stream being not yet passable for heavy artillery,

Pichegru withdrew, in the first instance, his troops to the left bank. But meanwhile the right of the Dutch position was assailed by the French, one brigade driven into Williamstadt, another made prisoners, and Breda invested. On the following day Grave capitulated, after an honourable resistance of two months, and a bombardment of three weeks, from famine; a noble example, the more worthy of admiration, from its having occurred in the middle of the general consternation, and after numerous instances of shameful dereliction of duty on the part of the Dutch troops.¹

So many disasters produced their usual effect in sowing the seeds of dissension among the allied generals. Walmoden was desirous of concentrating his forces on the Waal between Nimeguen and St André, to make head against the French, who were preparing to cross that river; but the Prince of Orange insisted on the allied forces approaching Gorcum, in order to cover the direct road to Amsterdam, where the Republican agents had been long preparing a revolutionary movement, and an explosion was daily expected. Thus thwarted in the only rational mode of carrying on the campaign, and despairing of making head against the greatly superior forces of the enemy, Walmoden resolved to abandon the United Provinces to their fate; and with a view to secure his retreat to Hanover, concentrated the English forces behind the Linge, and covered them on the left by the Austrian contingents. Orders were at the same time given to abandon the line of the Waal, as soon as the enemy should present themselves in force for the passage of that river. But an unexpected panic having occurred in the division intrusted with the park of artillery near Thiel, it became evident that this position, in the dejected state of the army, was not tenable; and the troops, with the exception of a small vanguard, were withdrawn behind the Rhine.²

Despairing of their situation after the departure of the English army, the States-General made proposals of peace to the French government, offering, as an inducement, to recognise the Republic, and pay down two hundred millions of francs. The overtures were in the highest degree desirable, as the success of the invasion depended entirely on the continuance of the frost, and an accommodation

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Dec. 29.

¹ Jom. vi.

186, 188.

Toul. v. 170.

Th. vii. 186, 190.

96.

Walmoden
retires to-
wards Han-
over.² Jom. vi.

189, 191.

Th. vii. 191.

97.

Dutch sue
for peace in
vain, and
French
cross the
Waal.

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1794.

Jan. 8, 1795.

¹ Th. vi. 191.
Toul. v. 171.
Jom. vi. 192.
196.

98.
Stadtholder
embarks for
England,
and a revolu-
tion
breaks out
at Amster-
dam, which
admits the
French
troops.

with Holland would disengage fifty thousand men for operations on the Rhine; but the Committee of Public Salvation, carried away by their extraordinary success, and desirous at all hazards of establishing a revolutionary government in Holland, haughtily rejected them, and ordered Pichegru instantly to invade that devoted country. The continuance of the frost, which had now set in with more severity than had been known for a hundred years, gave an unlooked-for success to this ambitious determination. On the 8th January the French army crossed the Waal, then almost completely frozen, at various points, which was facilitated by the capture of Thiel by General Moreau. A successful battle alone could now save the Dutch Republic; but the dejected state of the army, suffering under the extremity of cold and hardship, with the thermometer at 17° of Reaumur, rendered this a hopeless alternative. Walmoden, therefore, abandoned Holland altogether, and retiring to the line of the Issel from Arnheim to Zutphen, left the United Provinces to their fate.¹

The situation of the Stadtholder was now in the highest degree embarrassing. Abandoned by the army of General Walmoden, unable with his single forces to make head against the torrent of the Republican forces, distracted by the divisions in all the great towns in his rear, and daily expecting a revolution at Amsterdam, the Prince of Orange resolved to abandon the Republic altogether, and embark for England. With this view he presented himself before the States-General, and after declaring that he had done his utmost to save the country, but without success, avowed his resolution of retiring from the command, and recommended to them to make a separate peace with the enemy. On the following day he embarked at Scheveningen, and the States immediately issued an order to their soldiers to cease all resistance to the invaders, and dispatched ambassadors to the headquarters of Pichegru to propose terms of peace. Meanwhile the French generals, anxious to avoid the appearance of subjugating the Dutch, were pausing in their career of success, in expectation of revolutionary movements manifesting themselves in the principal towns. General Daendels wrote to the leaders of the insurrection:—"The representatives of France are desirous that the Dutch people should enfran-

chise themselves; they will not subdue them as conquerors; they are only waiting till the inhabitants of Haarlem, Leyden, and Amsterdam, rise in a body, and unite themselves to their brethren who have taken the lead at Boisle-Duc." The receipt of this offer raised to the utmost height the public effervescence at Amsterdam. The popular party of 1787 assembled in great numbers, and besieged the burgomasters in the town-hall; the advanced guard of the French army was already at the gates; terror seized the bravest hearts; the magistrates resigned their authority; the democratic leaders were installed in their stead: the tricolor flag hoisted on the Hôtel de Ville; and the Republican troops, amidst the shouts of the multitude, entered the city.¹

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XVII
1794.

Jan. 18,
1795.

¹ Jom. vi.
199, 200.
Toul. v. 175.
Th. vii. 191,
192.

The conquest of this rich and powerful capital, which had defied the whole power of Louis XIV., and imposed such severe conditions on France at the treaties of Utrecht and Aix-la-Chapelle, was of immense importance to the French government. Utrecht, Leyden, Haarlem, and all the other towns of the Republic, underwent a similar revolution. Every where the people received the French soldiers as deliverers; the power of the Convention soon extended from the Pyrenees to the northern extremity of Friesland. The immense naval resources, the vast wealth which ages of independence had accumulated in the United Provinces, lay at the mercy of the Convention. This great revolution, to the honour of the democratic party be it recorded, was accomplished without bloodshed, or any of the savage cruelty which had stained the first efforts of a free spirit in France; a signal example of the influence of free institutions in softening the asperity of civil dissension, calculated to alleviate many of the gloomy anticipations which the annals of the French Revolution might otherwise produce.²

99.
Fall of
Utrecht,
Leyden, and
Haarlem.

² Jom. vi.
208, 212.
Th. vii. 194.

These successes were soon followed by others, if possible still more marvellous. On the same day on which General Daendels had entered Amsterdam, the left wing of the army, after passing the lake of Biesbos on the ice, made themselves masters of the great arsenal of Dordrecht, containing six hundred pieces of cannon, ten thousand muskets, and immense stores of ammunition. The same division immediately after passed through Rotterdam, and

100.
Dutch fleet
captured by
the French
cavalry.

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took possession of the Hague, where the States-General were assembled. To complete the wonders of the campaign, a body of cavalry and flying artillery crossed the Zuyder Zee on the ice, and summoned the fleet, lying frozen up at the Texel. The commanders, confounded at the hardihood of the enterprise, surrendered their ships to this novel species of assailants. At the same time the province of Zealand capitulated to the French troops; and the right wing of the army, continuing its successes, compelled the English to abandon the line of the Issel; Friesland and Groningen were successively evacuated, and the whole United Provinces overrun by the Republican arms. The English Government, finding their services useless on the Continent, dismissed the Hanoverians to their native country, and the British, embarked on board their ships, speedily carried the terror of their arms to the remotest colonies of the Indian seas.¹

1 Journ. vi.
208, 212.
Th. vii. 194,
195.

101.
Extraor-
dinary dis-
cipline of
the French
soldiers, and
spoliation of
their com-
manders.

The discipline of the French soldiers during this campaign, contributed as much as their valour to these astonishing successes. Peaceable citizens, converted into soldiers by the decree of September 1793, were rapidly inured to the restraints and the subordination of discipline; after eight months of marches and combats, they undertook, without murmuring, a winter campaign; destitute of almost every thing, from the extreme depression of the paper money,* in which they received their pay, they crossed numerous streams in the depth of a rigorous winter, and penetrated, after a month's bivouacking, to Amsterdam, without having committed the slightest disorder. The inhabitants of that wealthy capital, justly apprehensive of pillage from the entrance of so necessitous a body, were astonished to see ten regiments of soldiers, half naked, defile through the streets to the sound of military music, pile their arms in the midst of ice and snow, and calmly wait, as in their own metropolis, the quarters and barracks assigned for their lodging. It was such conduct as this which spread so widely, and perpetuated so long, the general illusion in favour of

* The soldiers being still paid in assignats, which passed only for one fifteenth of their real value, the pay of an officer was only equal in real value to three francs, or half-a-crown a-month. In 1795, one-third was paid in specie, which raised the income of a captain to seventy francs, or three pounds sterling a-month.—Journ. vi. 214.

Republican institutions. But the Dutch were not long in being awakened to sad realities from their deceitful dream. Forty of their ships of war had been withdrawn with the Prince of Orange, and were lodged in the British ports; the remaining fifty were immediately taken possession of by the Republicans for the service of the French. The credit of the famous Bank of Amsterdam was violently shaken, and owed its withstanding the shock to the intervention of government; commerce was entirely destroyed by the English blockade; forced requisitions, to an immense amount, of clothing, stores, and provisions, gave the people a foretaste of the sweets of military dominion; while a compulsory regulation, which compelled the shopkeepers to accept of the depreciated French assignats at the rate of nine sous for a franc, restored the army to abundance by throwing the loss arising from the depreciation, to their infinite horror, upon the inhabitants of the enfranchised capital.¹

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¹ Th. vii.
193, 199.
Jom. vi.
212, 216.

To complete the picture of this memorable campaign, it is only necessary to recount the concluding operations on the Upper Rhine and the Alps.

The check at Kayserslautern having induced the French government to reinforce their troops on the German frontier, ten thousand men were withdrawn from Savoy, and fifteen thousand from La Vendée, to augment the armies on the Rhine. By the middle of June the armies on that river amounted to 114,000 men, of whom fifty thousand were on the lower part of the stream, forty thousand on the upper, and twenty-four thousand in the Vosges mountains. The Committee of Public Salvation incessantly impressed upon General Michaud, who commanded them, the necessity of taking the initiative, by renewing his attacks without intermission, and of acting in large masses; but that general, not sufficiently aware of the new species of warfare which the Republicans had commenced, adhered to the old system of a parallel attack along the whole line. This action took place on the 2d July 2. July, and led to no decisive result. The enemy were touched at all points, but vigorously pushed at none; and one thousand men lost to the Republicans without any advantage. Upon receiving intelligence of this check, Carnot renewed his orders to Michaud to concentrate his forces, and

102.
Concluding
operations
on the
Rhine.

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¹ *Jom.* vi. 59,
75, 77. *Th.*
vii. 83, 89.

act by columns on particular points. A fortnight after the attack was renewed, and, by a concentrated effort against the centre of the allied position, their whole army was compelled to retire. The Republicans advanced in pursuit as far as Frankenthal, and resumed the line of the Rehbach, abandoned at the commencement of the campaign. In this affair the Allies lost three thousand men, and the spirit of victory was transferred to the other side.¹

103.
Army of
the Moselle
occupies
Treves, and
Allies
driven
across the
Rhine.
Aug. 9.

Both parties remained in a state of inactivity after this contest, until the beginning of August, when the army of the Moselle, being reinforced by fifteen thousand choice troops from La Vendée, and raised to forty thousand men, made a forward movement and occupied Treves. But while this was going forward, the Prussian army, instructed by their recent disaster, and observing the dispersed position of the French army in the valley of the Rhine, made a sudden attack with twenty-five thousand men upon the division of General Meynier at Kayserslautern, totally defeated them, and drove them back with the loss of four thousand men. Had this success been vigorously supported, it might have led to the most important results, and totally changed the fate of the campaign; but not being followed up by the bulk of the allied force, which still preserved its extended position, it produced only a temporary consternation in the French armies. In effect such was the inactivity of the allied generals, and their obstinate adherence to the system of positions, that they allowed the army of the Moselle, not forty thousand strong, to remain undisturbed in Treves for two months, though flanked on one side by sixty-five thousand Prussians and Austrians, who occupied the Palatinate; and, on the other, by eighty thousand Imperialists, who were encamped in the neighbourhood of Luxembourg. At length, in the beginning of October, the Committee of Public Salvation directed the armies of the Moselle and the Rhine to unite and expel the Allies from the Palatinate. This junction having been effected, and the retreat of Clairfait beyond the Rhine having exposed their right flank to be turned, the Prussians fell back to Mayence, and crossed to the right bank by its bridge of boats. That important fortress was soon after invested; Rheinfels, contrary to the most express orders, evacuated; and the old Marshal Bender

Aug. 19.

Oct. 17.

shut up in the great fortress of Luxembourg, with ten thousand men. The rigours of the season, and the contagious diseases incident to the great accumulation of young soldiers, soon filled the hospitals, and the Republican armies were more severely weakened by the mortality of their winter rest, than they would have been by the losses of the most harassing summer campaign.¹

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1794.

¹ Jom. vi.
78, 86, 91.
Th. vii. 89.

In Savoy, the great detachments made in June to reinforce the army of the Rhine, reduced the French armies to the defensive; and they confined their efforts to maintaining themselves till the falling of the snows on the summits of the Alps, from the neighbourhood of Gex to the valley of the Stura. The plan of Buonaparte for the invasion of Piedmont by the valley of the Stura, was not adopted by the Committee of Public Salvation, and the breathing-time thus afforded them, enabled the court of Turin to recover from their consternation. Not disconcerted by this, he presented a second plan to the government, the object of which was to move forward the army of Italy to Demonte, and, after reducing that place, he proposed to advance to the valley of Coni, while sixteen thousand men, from the army of the Alps, covered their operations. The result of this would have been, that fifty thousand men would have taken up their winter-quarters on the southern side of the Alps. The fall of Robespierre prevented the execution of this plan, and postponed for two years the glories of the Italian campaign. Confined by the orders of the new government to defensive measures, the army of the Alps yet gained a brilliant advantage, by defeating a corps of ten thousand Austrians and Piedmontese, who had advanced, in concert with the English fleet, against Savona, in order to cut off the communication between the Republicans and the state of Genoa, from which their principal resources were derived. After this success both parties retired into their winter-quarters, and the snows of that rigorous season there, as elsewhere, gave repose to the contending armies.²

104.
Conclusion
of the campaign in
Savoy.

² Th. vii. 90,
91. Jom. vi.
97, 110, 114.

The contest in the west of France, which a little humanity on the part of the government would have completely terminated after the victories of Savenay and Mans, was rekindled during this year by the atrocious severities exercised towards the vanquished. The state of La Vendée at

105.
Renewal of
the war in
La Vendée.

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1794.

this period is thus painted by an eyewitness attached to the Republican armies :—" I did not see a single male being at the towns of Saint Amand, Charentonnay, or Herbiers. A few women alone had escaped the Republican sword. Country-seats, once so numerous in that country, farm-houses, cottages, in fine, habitations of every sort had been reduced to ashes. The herds and flocks were wandering in terror around their usual places of shelter, now smoking in ruins, and lowing in vain for the hands which were wont to feed them. At night, the flickering and dismal blaze of conflagration afforded light over the whole country. The bleating of the disturbed flocks, and the bellowings of the terrified cattle, were drowned in the hoarse notes of the ravens, and the howling of the wolves and other wild animals who had been attracted from afar to the scene of slaughter. As I journeyed in the night, guided by the uncertain light of the flames, a distant column of fire, widening and increasing as I approached, served as a beacon. It was the town of Mortagne in flames. When I arrived there, no living creatures were to be seen except a few wretched women, who were striving to save some remnants of their property during the general conflagration."¹ These appalling cruelties were universal, and produced the usual effect of such excessive and uncalled-for severity. The infernal columns of Thurreau, the Noyade of Carrier, drove the Vendéans to desperation. "Nullus spes victis si non desperare salutem,"* became the principle of a new war, if possible more murderous and disastrous than the former. But it was conducted on a different principle. Broken and dispersed by the Republican forces, pierced in every direction by the infernal columns, the Vendéans were unable to collect any considerable body of forces; but from amidst their woods and fastnesses, they maintained in detached parties an undaunted resistance. Stofflet and Charette continued, after the death of the other chiefs, to direct their efforts, though their mutual jealousy prevented any operations of considerable importance, and led them to sacrifice to their ambition the gallant M. De Marigny, one of the most intrepid and constant of the Royalist leaders.²

¹ Mém. d'un Ancien Administrateur des Armées Républicaines, p. 97.

² Jom. v. 278. Lac. xii. 295.

* "No hope to the vanquished, but in the efforts of despair."—SALLUST.

In the spring of 1794, General Thurreau established sixteen intrenched camps round the insurgent district; but the detachment of twenty-five thousand men from La Vendée to the Pyrenees and the Moselle, having compelled him to remain on the defensive, the Royalists took advantage of the respite thus afforded to reorganise their forces. Forty thousand men, including two thousand horse, were soon under arms in this unconquerable district, with which Charette stormed three of the intrenched camps, and put their garrisons to the sword. Meanwhile the severities of the Republicans, in persecuting the peasants of Brittany, who sheltered the fugitive Vendéans, kindled a new and terrible warfare in that extensive province, which, under the name of the Chouan War, long consumed the vitals, and paralysed the forces of the Republic. The nobles of that district, Puisaye, Bourmont, George Cadoudal, and others, commenced a guerilla warfare with murderous effect, and soon, on a space of twelve hundred square leagues, thirty thousand men were in arms in detached parties of two or three thousand each.¹

Brittany, intersected by woody ridges, abounding with hardy smugglers, ardently devoted to the Royalist cause, and containing a population of 2,500,000 souls, afforded far greater resources for the Royalist cause than the desolated La Vendée, which never contained a third of that number of inhabitants. Puisaye was the soul of the insurrection. Proscribed by the Convention, with a price set upon his head; wandering from chateau to chateau, from cottage to cottage, he became acquainted with the spirit of the Bretons, and their inextinguishable hatred of the Convention, and conceived the bold design of hoisting the Royal standard again amidst its secluded fastnesses. His indefatigable activity, energetic character, and commanding eloquence, eminently qualified this intrepid chief to become the leader of a party, and soon brought all the other Breton nobles to range themselves under his standard. Early in 1794, he opened a communication with the English government, and strongly urged the immediate landing of an expedition of ten thousand men, with arms and ammunition, with which he answered for the re-establishment of the Royalist cause. So formidable did this war soon become, that, according to an official report of Carnot,

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106.

Storming of
Thurreau's
intrenched
camps

¹ Jom. vi.
243, 246,
248. Lac.
xii. 297.

107.

Chouan
insurrection
in Brittany,
and character
of
Puisaye.

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before the end of the year, there were no less than a hundred and twenty thousand Republicans on the shores of the ocean, of whom above eighty thousand were in active warfare. Even in Normandy, the seeds of revolt were beginning to manifest themselves; and detached parties of royalists showed themselves between the Loire and the Seine, and struck terror into Paris itself. "On considering this state of affairs," says Jomini, "it is evident that there existed over all the west of France powerful elements of resistance, and that if they had been united under one head, and seconded by the allied powers, it was by no means impossible to have restored the Royalist cause." Had the Duke D'Enghien, with a few thousand men, landed in Brittany, and established a council, directing alike Puisaye, Bernier, Stofflet, Sapinaud, Scapeaux, and others, so as to combine their energies for one common object, instead of acting as they did without any concert in detached quarters, it is impossible to calculate what the result might have been. It is painful to think what at that crisis might have been effected, had fifteen thousand troops from England formed the nucleus of an army, made the Royalists masters of some of the fortified seaport towns with which the coast abounded, and lent to the insurgents the aid of her fleet, and the terrors of her name.¹

¹ Puisaye's
Mém. iv.
117, 141.
Jom. vi.
234, 252.

108.
Immense
results of
the cam-
paign.

Such was the memorable campaign of 1794; one of the most glorious in the annals of France; not the least memorable in the history of the world. Beginning on every side under disastrous or critical circumstances, it terminated with universal glory to the Republic. The Allies at its commencement, were besieging, and soon captured the last of the Flemish frontier towns; the Republican forces on the Rhine were unable to make head against their adversaries; the Alps were still in the possession of the Sardinian troops, and severe disasters had checkered the campaign at both extremities of the Pyrenees. At its conclusion, the Spaniards, defeated both in Biscay and Catalonia, were suing for peace; the Piedmontese, driven over the summit of the Alps, were trembling for their Italian possessions; the allied forces had every where recrossed the Rhine; Flanders was subdued, La Vendée vanquished, Holland revolutionised, and the English auxiliaries had fled for refuge into the states of Hanover.

From a state of depression greater than in the darkest era of Louis XIV., France had passed at once to triumphs greater than had graced the proudest period of his reign.

But these immense successes had not been gained without proportionate losses, and it was already evident that the enormous sacrifices by which they had been achieved, could not be continued for any length of time without inducing national ruin. During the course of the campaign the Republic had strained every nerve; 1,700,000 men had at one time combated by sea and land under its banners; and at its close, 1,100,000 were still numbered in the rolls of the army. But of this great force, only 600,000 were actually under arms; the remainder encumbered the hospitals, or were scattered in a sickly or dying state in the villages on the line of the army's march. The disorder in the commissariat, and departments entrusted with the clothing and equipment of the troops, had risen to the highest pitch: hardly any exertions could have provided for the wants of such a multitude of armed men, and the cupidity or selfishness of the revolutionary agents had diverted great part of the funds destined for these objects, into the accumulation of their private fortunes. It augments our admiration for the soldiers of the Republic, when we recollect that their triumphs were generally achieved without magazines, tents, or equipments of any kind; that the armies, destitute of every thing, bivouacked in the most rigorous season equally with the mildest, and that the innumerable multitudes who issued from its frontiers, almost always provided for their daily wants from the country through which they passed.¹

Nothing could have enabled the government to make head against such expenses, but the system of assignats, which in effect, for the time, gave them the disposal of all the wealth of France.* The funds on which this enormous paper circulation was based, embracing all the confiscated property in the kingdom, in lands, houses, and

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109.
The prodigious forces of the Republic.

¹ *Jom. vi.*
214, 215.
Toul. v. 194.

110.
Immense issues of assignats to uphold these great expenses.

* The monthly expenses of the war had risen to 200,000,000 francs, or nearly L. 8,000,000, while the income was only 60,000,000, or L. 2,400,000; an enormous deficit, amounting to L. 67,200,000 in the year, which was supplied only by the incessant issue of paper money, bearing, by law, a forced circulation. There were 7,500,000,000 of francs, or L. 300,000,000 in circulation; the sum in the treasury was still 500,000,000 or L. 20,000,000; so that the amount issued by government was eight milliards, or L. 320,000,000 sterling.—*Toul. v. 194; Toul. vii. 239.*

CHAP. . moveables, were estimated at fifteen milliards of francs, or
 1794. above £600,000,000 sterling; but in the distracted state
 of the country, few purchasers could be found for such
 immense national domains, and therefore the security for
 all practical purposes was merely nominal. The conse-
 quence was, that the assignat fell to one-twelfth of its
 real value; in other words, an assignat for twenty-four
 francs, was worth only two francs; that is, a note for a
 pound was worth only 1s. 8d. As all the payments, both
 to and by government, were made in this depreciated
 currency, and as it constituted the chief, and in many
 places the sole circulation of the country, the losses to
 creditors or receivers of money of every description became
 enormous; and, in fact, the public expenses were defrayed
 out of the chasm made in their private fortunes. It was
 evident that such a state of things could not continue
 permanently; and accordingly the national exhaustion
 appeared in the campaign of 1795, and the Republic would
 have sunk under the failure of its financial resources in a
 few years, had not the genius of Napoleon discovered a
 new mode of maintaining the armies, and by making war
 maintain war, converted a suffering defensive, into an
 irresistible aggressive power.¹

1 Th. vii.
239.

111.
Progressive
increase of
the French
forces dur-
ing the cam-
paign.

At the commencement of the campaign, the Allies were
 an overmatch for the French at every point, and the
 superiority of their discipline was more especially evident
 in the movements and attacks of large masses. That their
 enterprises were not conducted with skill; that they
 suffered under the jealousies and divisions of the cabinets
 which directed their movements; and that by adhering to
 the ruinous system of extending their forces, and a war of
 positions, they threw away all the advantages which might
 have arisen from the number and experience of their
 forces, must appear evident to the most careless observer.
 The fate of the campaign in Flanders was decided by the
 detachment of Jourdan, with forty thousand men from
 the Meuse, to reinforce the army of the Sambre; what
 then might have been expected, if Cobourg had early con-
 centrated his forces for a vigorous attack in Flanders, or
 the immense masses which lay inactive on the Rhine
 been brought to bear on the general fortune of the cam-
 paign?²

2 Jom. vi.
330, 338.

But it may be doubted whether, by any exertions, the allied cause could have been finally made triumphant in France at this period. The time for energetic measures was past; the revolutionary fever was burning with full fury, and fifteen hundred thousand men were in arms to defend the Republic. By bringing up column after column to the attack; by throwing away with merciless prodigality the lives of the conscripts; by sparing neither blood nor treasure to accomplish their objects; by drawing without scruple upon the wealth of one-half of France by confiscation, and of the other by assignats, the Committee of Public Salvation had produced a force which was for the time unconquerable. By a more energetic and combined system of warfare, the Allies might have broken through the frontier on more than one point, and wrested from the Republic her frontier fortresses; but they would probably have found, in the heart of the country, a resistance which would in the end have proved their ruin. What might have been easily done by vigorous measures in 1792 or 1793, could not have been accomplished by any exertions in 1794, after the great levies of the Convention had come into the field, and the energy of revolution was turned into military confidence by the successes which had concluded the preceding campaign.

It deserves notice too, what signal benefit accrued to France in this campaign from its central position, and the formidable barrier of fortified towns with which it was surrounded. By possessing an interior, while the Allies were compelled to act on an exterior line, the French government was enabled to succour the weak parts of their frontier, and could bring their troops to bear in overwhelming masses on one point; while their opponents, moving round a larger circumference, charged with the protection of different kingdoms, and regulated by distant, and often discordant cabinets, were unable to make corresponding movements to resist them. Thus, the transference of the troops which conquered at Toulon to the Eastern Pyrenees; of the divisions of the army of Savoy to the Rhine; of Jourdan's corps to the Sambre; and of the garrison of Mayence to Nantes; the immediate causes of the successes in Catalonia, the Palatinate, Flanders, and La Vendée, successively took place, without any corres-

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XIII.

1794.

112.

The period
of success
for the
Allies was
past.

113.

General
reflections
on the cam-
paign.

CHAP. ponding movement having been made in the troops
 174. opposed to them, to reinforce the threatened quarters.
 175. Each division of the allied forces, delighted at being
 176. relieved from the pressure under which it had previously
 suffered, relapsed into a state of inactivity, without ever
 recollecting, that with an active and enterprising enemy,
 a serious defeat at one point was a disaster at all.

114. The Archduke Charles has said, that the great superiority
 of France, in a military point of view, arises from the
 chain of fortresses with which it is surrounded, whereby
 it is enabled, with equal facility, to throw delays in the
 way of an invasion of their own, and to find a solid base
 for an irruption into their neighbours' territory; and that
 the want of such a barrier on the right bank of the Rhine
 is the principal defect in the system of German defence.¹

Great mili-
 tary effect of
 the French
 fortresses.
 1 Archduke
 Charles, i. p.
 274.

The campaign of 1794 affords a striking confirmation of
 this observation. After having driven the French forces,
 during the campaign of 1793, from the field, and compelled
 them to seek shelter in intrenched camps, or fortified
 towns, the Allies were so much impeded by the siege of
 the fortresses which lay in their road, that they were
 compelled to halt in their career of success; and France
 had time to complete the vast armaments which afterwards
 proved so fatal to Europe. When the Republic, on the
 other hand, became the invading power in 1794, the want
 of any fortified towns to resist their progress, enabled
 them to overrun Flanders, and drive the Allies in a few
 weeks beyond the Rhine. This consideration is of vital
 importance, both in the estimate of the relative power of
 France and the neighbouring states, and in all measures
 intended to restrain its ambitious projects. It was the
 same in ancient times. The Roman armies, wholly unable
 to withstand the cavalry of Hannibal in the field, found a
 respite from their disasters after the slaughter of Cannæ
 in the numerous fortified towns with which Italy was
 studded. From the moment that the war from one of
 battles became one of sieges, the fortune of the Carthaginian
 conqueror began to waver; and the mighty torrent which
 had rolled with impetuous fury from the Ebro to the
 Tiber, was lost in surrounding the inconsiderable fortresses
 of Campania and Apulia.²

2 Arnold's
 Rome, iii.
 176, 256.

There are few spectacles in nature so sublime as that of

a people bravely combating for their liberties against a powerful and vindictive enemy. That spectacle was exhibited in the most striking manner by the French nation during this campaign. The same impartial justice which condemns with unmeasured severity the bloody internal, must admire the dignified and resolute external conduct of the Convention. With unbending firmness, though often atrocious cruelty, they coerced alike internal revolt and foreign violence; and selecting out of the innumerable ranks of their defenders the most worthy, laid the foundation of that illustrious school of military chiefs who afterwards sustained the fortunes of the empire. It is melancholy to be obliged to admit, that it was this cruelty which was one cause of their triumphs; and that the fortunes of the Republic might have sunk under its difficulties, but for the inflexible severity with which its Government overawed the discontented. The iron rule of Terror undoubtedly drew out of the agonies of the state the means of its ultimate deliverance. The impartial justice of Providence apparently made that terrific period the means of punishing the national sins of both the contending parties; and while the sufferings of the Empire were the worthy retribution of its cruelty, and the necessary consequences of its injustice, the triumphs to which they led brought deserved chastisement on those powers who had sought, in that suffering, the means of unjust aggrandisement.

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XVI.

1794.

115.

Sublime
aspect of
France at
this period
in external
affairs.

END OF VOLUME IV.

